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Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur
Mae Shirley Stuart

Date of Birth — Date de naissance
May 8, 1943

Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance
Canada

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe
RR3 Site 19A C42
McMurchie Rd
Westbank B.C
V0H 2A0

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Dr. John Oster

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ADAPTING ENGLISH 30 FOR ADULT LEARNERS

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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(Signed) ..Shirley Stuart..

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

44 McMurchie Road,
Westbank,
British Columbia. VOH 2AO

DATED ...December 16,... 1980..

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Adapting English 30 for Adult Learners submitted by Shirley Stuart in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

John E. Oster

Supervisor

James M. Small

Date: December 16, 1980.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to synthesize current literature concerning characteristics of adult students and to develop out of this theoretical framework a practical application of dominant theories by making suggestions about objectives, content and methodology for teaching English 30 (academic grade twelve English) to adults.

Over the past decade, an increasingly large number of adult students have been registering in English 30, a course designed for adolescents in the high school academic stream. The study was intended to examine ways of adapting this course to make it more appropriate to adult learners. A review of pertinent literature indicated that factors stemmed from three major areas: physiology, psychology and sociology. The review of literature provided considerable evidence that the blanket application of traditional secondary education materials and techniques is often inappropriate for adult students. The distinctive characteristics and learning behavior of some adults may include physical declination, underestimation of themselves as learners, a repetoire of potentially antagonistic experience, role-conflict, status-protectiveness, and accumulated disuse of learning skills, all of which may be counterbalanced by heightened motivation, a wealth of experience for enrichment of classes, and a concern for immediacy of application.

In order to create favorable learning conditions for these students, course objectives, content and methods need to be re-examined in the context of adult education rather than secondary education in order to develop a program sensitive to the students as well as to the society. This involves a philosophical shift in which the educational process becomes lifelong learning rather than simply preparatory learning. The instructor's role is to facilitate the process.

Research in adult education, however, is only beginning to scratch the surface regarding investigation of the variables related to the instructional process. Because of their increasing numbers, it is crucial to further identify the clientele of English 30 (adult) for the purpose of refining educational objectives and course content as well as for determining methodologies which are both effective and efficient. Within the boundaries of the resulting course, there is scope for fostering the development of both individual and societal goals.

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The ultimate problem of all education is to coordinate the psychological and social factors.

(John Dewey, 1938)

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Background to the Problem

The field of adult education has grown in size and interest during this century and, in all likelihood, will continue to do so. Changes in social trends and labor demands, combined with declining student enrolment have forced an examination of education for adults. Nineteenth-century parenthood, for example, was a life-long career in contrast to the present day life-stage trend. Then "the combination of a relatively late marriage, short life-expectancy and high fertility rate rarely allowed for an 'empty-nest' stage" (Erikson, 1978, p.206). In addition to this, the changed role of women in our society, the pace and direction of technology, the resulting job shortage with related changes in the labor market, and changes in the political climate surrounding education--all have contributed to increase the number of adult full-time and part-time learners.

Many institutions have responded to the pressure for expanded educational opportunities for these new students by relaxing their admissions policies, by allowing academic credit for experiential learning and by increasing their flexibility and accessibility. The Department of Advanced Education and Manpower has expanded to accommodate those students registered in non-credit courses in Alberta, but the adults who register in high school credit courses have remained under the jurisdiction of Alberta Education, and special provisions for them have been primarily administrative. "Special Provisions for Mature Students" (Junior-Senior High School Handbook, 1979-1980) have allowed that mature (adult) students desiring credits in English 30, for example, might complete the course in 66.5 hours (half the Grade Twelve allotted credit hours) and if successful would receive as many as 15 high school credits. In addition to this, adults would not be bound by any attendance prescriptions but would be allowed to write final examinations without attending classes. These examinations are often duplicates of those administered to regular Grade Twelve classes. Adults are expected to meet the performance levels required from adolescents in order to attain high school credits, despite their having the prerequisites (English 10 and English 20) waived. The outline presented to interested adults by the Evening Credit Division of the County of Strathcona in its 1979 brochure typified the prospective course content: "the culmination of the study of literature in the high school areas previously studied--the essay, the short story, the novel, drama and poetry -- considered in greater depth." The mature student, defined by Alberta Education and quoted in the same brochure, was to be 19 years of age or over, provided that he or she had left school and remained out of school for at least eight consecutive months." This definition, however, is a guideline rather than a rule, as special status could be granted to a 17-year-old student if, in the opinion of the principal, it was in the student's best interest to do so. The number of adult students registered in this special plan has increased significantly each year indicating the emergence of a new pattern of formal education--"recurrent" rather than consecutive.

The trend toward a more blended, less linear life plan has been a major thrust behind recurrent education, a movement Erikson (1978) called "the new social reality" (p.197), which has had major implications for educators. Because adult education has become the fastest growing segment in the field of education, demands for courses using a wide range of alternative methods, new approaches and flexible structures are increasing.

One agency concerned with adult teaching methods, the Faculty of Extension of the University of Alberta, directs a series of non-credit courses designed to facilitate the teaching of adult courses. A leaflet published by the Faculty of Extension (1980) states: "Adult learners of the future will be much more demanding of competence from adult education practitioners" (1980).

In Alberta, The Report of the Committee on Educational Planning (Worth, 1972) outlined educational objectives consistent with recurrent education philosophy. It presented a humanistic view, endorsing lifelong learning in a flexible structure, indicating that the traditional preparatory function of education in Alberta had to be invalidated and that this development would be a major contributor to increased social harmony. The objectives were: (a) the achievement of greater personal self-fulfillment; (b) the development of the individual's ability to cope with the stresses of accelerating change and the greater complexity of society; (c) the attainment of a better adaptation of schooling to the changing needs of the labor market; and (d) the creation of a more adaptable system of personal freedom with regard to choice between work and study.

A parallel study in Ontario (Wright, 1972) during the same year stressing the need for "access," "diversity," "flexibility," "transferability," "equity," and "accountability" is an indication that Alberta was not unique, and that the movement toward recurrent education was widespread. This was reflected by the Report of the Task Force on Post-Secondary Education in Manitoba (1973), the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in the United States (1973), and The Faure Report of the International Commission on the Development of Education (Unesco, 1972).

Rising out of such widespread emphasis on the value of providing educational opportunities for adult students, however, is controversy concerning the aims and objectives of education at that level.

There is "tension that is set up between the means versus the ends, by individuality versus society" (Apps, 1973, p.11) which lies at the heart of education at all levels. Of particular significance to those who design and teach English 30 (adult) is the question of whether to address the problem of teaching a practical communications course or a more liberal literature course. Exposure to the philosophy behind the recurrent education movement, to research in the field, and to ideas about future developments could help practitioners clarify their perceptions about what is both desirable and feasible for their adult students.

In general, adult education has come to be recognized in light of experience and research as a social, human, and political necessity. In his introduction to Adult Education as a Field of Study and Practice (Campbell, 1977), Coolie Verner expresses a common concern: "Unfortunately, more is known about how to educate adults than is now applied by those in the field responsible for providing adults with educational opportunities" (p. vii).

For many adults, English 30 is compulsory, mandated by post-secondary institutions as a prerequisite for entrance. The diverse needs of adult students have been reflected in the attention given to the availability of the course but not in the objectives, the content, or the methodology. The needs, interests, backgrounds and capabilities of adult students are not necessarily those of adolescents. For the most part, adult English 30 students are mature, part-time students enrolled in a course geared for younger, full-time students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to synthesize current literature concerning characteristics of adult students and to develop out of this theoretical framework a practical application of dominant theories by making suggestions about objectives, content, and methodology for teaching English 30 to adults.

Significance of the Study

In view of the revisions currently in progress in Alberta by the Senior High School English Ad Hoc Curriculum Committee, this study is intended to increase the attention given to the growing number of adults registered in English 30. At a time when many other segments of society are recognizing the special needs of adult students, no special curriculum is being presented for English 30 (adult) in Alberta and the apparent assumption is that changes in the material of the curriculum or in the method of presentation could be accommodated by classroom teachers without any special provisions being made. However, the University of Alberta offers few formal courses at the undergraduate level for preparing teachers of adults. This study, therefore, directed toward the practitioner, is seeking out emerging theories about adult learning for the purpose of improving educational practice.

In 1973, the "Commission on Non-Traditional Study" was established with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Its mission was to make recommendations to fulfill the promise of recurrent education:

> . . . this attitude puts the student first and the institution second, concentrates more on the former's need than the latter's convenience, encourages diversity of individual opportunity rather than uniform prescription, and de-emphasizes time, space, and even course requirements in favor of competence and, where applicable, performance. (p. xv.)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In becoming acquainted with the literature of this field of study, one is struck by the variety of terms which describe the field of adult education, many of which have only subtle distinctions. In addressing the problem of a lack of a common language Verner (1964) noted:

> The principal barrier to the perfection of our conceptual equipment is that of language. It is nothing short of phenomenal that so much information about educating adults has been accumulated in spite of the lack of a common language . . . borrowing language from elsewhere does not meet the basic need for a language specific to adult education. (p.27)

Attempts have been made in the past ten years to rectify the situation, culminating in a multi-lingual glossary of terms prepared for the International Bureau of Education at the UNESCO conference in Paris, 1979. Terminology of Adult Education attempts to describe what have been previously diverse and various definitions and to give some precision to a language to make it more useful, especially on the international level. The editors, however, concluded that "this terminological uncertainty reflects reality. Adult education is a field of activity characterized by diversity and instability. New goals, new forms of action continually appear and modify the terms" (p.28). The following definitions have been chosen for the purposes of this paper:

Adult	is defined by Alberta Education: 19 years of age or over.
Adult education	is that education which is directed to those students who are 19 years of age or over.

Andragogy	(based on the Greek word 'aner' meaning "man") is the art and science of helping adults learn. (Knowles, 1973)
Continuing education	is "a system whereby an individual's education which has been interrupted, is resumed on more or less the same lines to a higher level of achievement." (Houghton, 1972, p.12)
English 30	is the Grade 12 matriculation course in English in Alberta. (See Appendices A and B)
English 30 (adult)	is used to distinguish the English 30 course for adults from the English 30 course taught to adolescents.
Recurrent education	is a somewhat broader term than "continuing education," incorporating incidental as well as intentional learning experiences. "Life itself is a continuous learning process, but each person needs specific opportunities for continuing, purposive and sequential learning in order that he or she may keep abreast of technical and social change, may equip himself or herself for changes in his or her own circumstances . . . and may achieve his or her full potential for individual development." (Terminology of Adult Education, 1979, p.29)

Methods and Procedures

This study was conducted under the guidelines of a type of philosophical research, reflective inquiry, which involved initially an examination of books, articles and other research in the field of adult education which pertained to English 30 (adult). Although many of the findings had implications common to all adult educators, emphasis was placed on providing a conceptual model for English 30 (adult) teachers, based on the opinions of acknowledged leaders as well as the perspectives of researchers and practitioners.

Slesinger and Stephenson (1934) defined research as "the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend, correct or verify knowledge whether that knowledge aid in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art" (p.330). In order to obtain a representative picture of the field, material was drawn from many disciplines, including highlights from the biological, psychological and sociological perspectives, together with some of the social and environmental issues. "The challenge in this type of research," according to Byrne (1977), "is to achieve objectivity in selecting representative readings from the universe of existing literature on the topic and to analyze insightfully the opinions and practices expressed in those readings" (p.128). Several reputable comprehensive research anthologies were used as initial guidelines, namely Adult Education as a Field of Study and Practice (Campbell, 1977), Aging and Behaviour (Botwinick, 1978), and Experimental Studies in Adult Learning and Memory (Lumsden & Sherron, 1975). In addition, an examination was conducted of the periodicals and journals of adult education since 1970 to the present which pertained to the field of adult education in North America, in particular, Canada. Included in these were: Adult Education: A Journal of Research and Theory (1970-1979), The Directory of Educational Research in Canada 1970-1978), and Yearbook of Adult and Continuing Education (1970-1979).

The research was divided into two segments: (1) examination of those studies that had been conducted regarding the characteristics of adult learners which changed as a result of advancing age, (2) consideration of possible implications for an academic English course for adults. The first segment included physiological factors such as hearing and sight; psychological factors, such as intelligence, memory, learning and motivation; and sociological factors such as recurrent education, community education and the impact of technology on education. The second segment included research implications drawn from literature as well as possible implications advanced by the author. These were divided into three aspects of curriculum planning: goals and objectives, content, and methods. The intention was that practical suggestions for further research rising out of such a broad picture would contribute to the underlying rationale. The result would be a new paradigm built on many facets of the various theories and hypotheses, leading to insights on which to design curriculum. This study of adult patterns of learning and developmental characteristics would provide the basis for suggesting appropriate teacher response in regard to curriculum materials and corresponding methodology.

Delimitations

1. Although the literature surveyed was drawn from writers in the United States and Canada, the focus of this study was on English 30 (adult) in Alberta.
2. This study was limited to works published in the past decade because the field of adult education has undergone rapid change and growth, and these studies appeared to be more relevant to the present situation.

3. Studies in the field of English as a Second Language or Adult Basic Education were excluded because of the different objectives of such courses and characteristics of the clientele.

Assumptions

1. Generally there can be found sufficient similarity between the educational situations in Canada and in the United States, so that American studies in the field of adult education may be considered pertinent to the Alberta educational scene.
2. English 30 will continue to be a requirement for entrance to many post-secondary institutions.
3. The number of adult students registering in English 30 will continue to increase.
4. Sound curriculum building should take into consideration the needs, abilities and aspirations of students.

Limitations

A limitation inevitable in this type of study is the subjectivity involved not only in the choice of material but also in the ability to read that material insightfully. The danger lies in misunderstanding the writing and so erring on the value of the position taken. This risk was countered as far as possible by thorough investigation of many perspectives in the field of adult education and by a comprehensive study of the literature. Several volumes of integrated research findings served as guides, including: Aging and Behavior (Botwinick, 1978), and Adult Education as a Field of Study and Practice (Campbell, 1977), both of which contained extensive bibliographies.

A second limitation is related to the problem of translating general principles into specific instructional and curricular choices. The problem of translating theory into practical applications is complicated in the present situation by the fact that information about the nature of the student population in English 30 (adult) is unavailable. Both Alberta Education and the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower informed the investigator that separate records of adults students in English 30 are not maintained. Therefore, the suggestions in Chapter IV for adapting the current English 30 course for adults are limited in their specificity by the generality of the knowledge about the nature of the intended learners. These suggestions should be of some value, however, to those teachers who have neither training nor experience in adult education, yet are teaching English 30 (adult). Although the scope of this study is broad, an examination of the many aspects of the paradigm followed by speculative discussion is meant to be hypothesis-generating rather than hypothesis-testing.

It is not the education of children that can save the world from destruction, it is the education of adults.

(Wells, 1933)

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A good part of the current research concerning teaching adults has been incorporated in Chapters III and IV, but there are three other aspects which can provide a more complete setting for the thesis. The controversy surrounding the assumptions underlying andragogy, recent studies illuminating the conditions of part-time students, and closely related research concerning the teaching of English to adults--all help to provide the context for the present study.

Andragogy

Fundamental to the proponents of andragogy is the contention that teaching adults differs essentially from teaching children. Andragogues have adopted the European term "andragogy" to distinguish the art and science of teaching adults from "pedagogy," the art and science of teaching children.

The chief proponent of andragogy in North America is Malcolm Knowles (1970, 1973) who has presented five basic assumptions regarding differences between adults and children. These differences are in the areas of self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and time-perspective.

Other educators, (Houle, 1972; Elias, 1977) however, reject the theories of andragogy contending that

> teaching adult literacy involves the same processes and techniques as teaching child literacy. The teaching of subject matter, skills, values and attitudes employs the same processes and strategies. Teaching 'logically' involves explaining, concluding, inferring, giving reasons, demonstrating, defining and comparing. These processes are used with both adults and children. Teaching 'strategically' involves motivating, counselling, evaluating, planning, encouraging, disciplining, and questioning. These two are appropriate for both children and adults.
> (Elias, 1977, p.255)

In response, McKenzie (1979) maintains that adults and children are cardinally different by virtue of different modes of being-in-the-world, that adults and children exhibit different modes of existing, and that "the existential differences between adults and children require a strategic differentiation of educational practice" (p.256). Knowles (1979) clarifies his position by admitting that pedagogy and andragogy are not necessarily a dichotomy, but can be viewed on a continuum, and that, under those circumstances where adults undertake to learn a body of totally strange content as totally dependent learners, with very little previous experience to build on and with low readiness to learn it, "the assumptions of pedagogy would be realistic and pedagogical strategies would be appropriate" (p.52).

Carlson (1979) adds a new dimension in showing that adult education requires some differentiation from the education of children since the legal and educational rights of children are different from those of adults. He criticizes Elias' definitions of education charging that they do not seem to give rise to the heavy emphasis of Knowles on self-directed learning. Nor does Paulo Freire's (1970) commitment to dialogue seem to flow from such a theory of education. Secondly, Carlson outlines the philosophical understanding and, demands from practitioners, "a commitment to a view of man consonant with the emphasis of andragogy" (p.563).

Campbell (1977) commenting on the Alberta scene says that certain strategies in the design of adult learning projects may be more productive than others. "In short, adults learn best in adult ways" (p.11). They are characterized by maturity, "savoir faire," workaday and social experience, refined judgment, and value systems tested in practice.

> Together they form a departure for adult educational practice. Merely to superimpose in blanket fashion the methodology conventionally applied to the typical student in the public school system or to the youth in post-secondary education is to court failure. (p.12)

Many adult educators are recognizing, however, that even if andragogy is not sufficiently well established in this country to merit a separate discipline, there are certain differences in the nature of adult students and their societal roles to support the demand for increased attention to their needs.

What expectations these students bring to class in regard to the learning process might also be pertinent to the effectiveness of teaching strategies. Several studies have attempted to determine the relationship between students' expectations of how a course will be delivered and their levels of satisfaction. Schroeder (1977) and McKean (1977) investigated levels of formality in educational settings in relation to students' hopes for the learning experience, agreeing that there was interaction between the amount of formal schooling of the participants and their expectations about the level of formality in the classroom, but that measures such as student perceptions of satisfaction, the amount of learning experienced, consequences of course experiences, and grades that teachers assigned did not seem much related. Although such studies warn against making unqualified assumptions regarding student input into how a course is taught, they raise a crucial question regardng the techniques of andragogy. How is their effectiveness, or lack of it, related to what the students expect from the role of the teacher?

Part-Time Learners

Many of the special needs of adult students rise out of their status as part-time learners. Profiles of average part-time students indicate that they are enrolled in most courses for job-related reasons (Morstain & Smart, 1974; Phelps, 1970; Gross, 1977), but there are many other factors influencing their motivation such as age, socioeconomic status, and amount of previous education. Waniewicz, in a study entitled Demand for Part-Time Learning in Ontario, related the interests and needs of the part-time student to programming that would minimize any impediment to learning. He found that, in 1974, an amazing 53 percent of the adult population in Ontario were either learners or what he called would-be-learners (wishing to undertake systematic learning) on a part-time basis. Thirty-five percent of these students were enrolled for the purpose of achieving personal goals, as opposed to achieving more practical work-related goals. Financial concerns also play a large part in the lives of part-time adult students as a result of discriminatory practices from student aid and scholarship plans, tax deductions, and educational institutions (O'Keefe, 1977; Mills, 1979). However, increased responsibilities to family and community do not always have a detrimental effect on achievement, as indicated in the study conducted by McPherson (1971) which showed a positive correlation between higher grades and being married (but only in males).

The desire for increased learning potential often plays a part in a student's decision to enroll and many adults are characterized as most often using a course as a means toward upward mobility or status. Many adults wish to catch up on lost opportunities or to resume an education which had, for various reasons, been interrupted. With responsibilities at home, at work, or in the community which competed for their time and effort, these students were now-oriented and impatient to reach their goals.

Assistance in aiding adult learners to set and achieve their goals is considered a high priority in their education. MacKay (1973) warned that adult students are frequently in desperate need of counseling. A staff study conducted at Humber College in Ontario (1973) also stated that adults have a greater need for counseling because they are not in a sequential learning pattern. Counseling for adult learners is highly important but currently inadequate (Knox, 1979) and involves information-giving, assessment, educational and occupational career planning, coping with related problems, advocacy, referral, and includes any form of assistance intended to help students select and plan their educative studies, or to relate their studies to their leisure (Giene, 1972).

In 1970, "A Brief to the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario" (OISE) outlined what it found to be the major concerns of mature and part-time students. Besides encouraging an increase in financial assistance to these students in Ontario, a move was made to eliminate traditional barriers and practices which discouraged or isolated part-time students. The "Report of the Task Force on Post-Secondary Education in Manitoba" Wright (1973) made specific recommendations furthering the same trends: that the school day be extended with the school year on a twelve-month basis, and that institutions adapt their teaching time and course planning to part-time courses, to work-study combinations, to modular programs, and to external delivery in order to equalize and integrate opportunities for adult students.

Innovations in procedural and structural adaptations by institutions to meet the needs of these new learners led to innovative systems of education like off-campus paid work experience (Knowles, 1972); "learning pavilions," which encouraged independent study and served as a home-base for adult learners (Carnegie Commission, 1972); "the external degree" based on learning outside an institution (Houle, 1973); "educational brokering," in a center which functioned as a broker outside Syracuse (Heffernan, Macy & Vickers, 1976); and "The Learning Exchange" grounded in the theories of Illich and Reimer where Chicago-based learners controlled their own education through a network of learning exchange of human resources and opportunities, (Squires, 1975).

The Province of Alberta proved to be a leader in Canada by taking specific steps to accommodate those students who could not or chose not to attend the traditional post-secondary institutions. In an effort to follow the principles and rationale of recurrent education, Athabasca University was designed to meet the needs of people who were socially or geographically isolated. Downey (1974) and Phillips (1979) found that a substantial number of students in Alberta benefited from this non-conventional institution.

Ten years ago, L. Garrett, in his thesis "A Survey of Adult Education in Edmonton, Alberta" (1970), stated that, "adult education is growing rapidly and in many directions" (p.5). Surely a similar study in 1980 would indicate phenomenal growth, but that growth in number and availability of courses would not yet have been equalled by a corresponding growth in the research necessary to develop suitable academic courses.

Teaching English to Adults

Studies related to the teaching of high school English courses to adults are extremely rare. Although courses in English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education are becoming increasingly popular, this study has not included research in those areas because of their different objectives, content and student characteristics. Likewise, literature on teaching English to college students is marginally related, but because the sample groups are not typical of English 30 classes, those studies were not included. Unfortunately, very few studies relating directly to the topic at hand could be found.

One study concerning the factors associated with the completion and non-completion of correspondence courses, including English 30 as one of the most popular courses, identified some reasons for withdrawal, but made no attempt to categorize students according to age (Balay, 1978).

Charlotte S. Schilt (1980) in an article entitled "Teaching English in Lifelong Learning Programs" in the English Journal identified some of the characteristics of adult learners and some of their aspirations for courses in English:

> Lifelong education students are usually more motivated, more experienced and more widely read than their 18 to 20 year-old counterparts, and will be less interested in what the instructor knows than in what they feel is missing from their education. . . What they want out of their classes is not just a good grade, but rather help in fitting their life experiences to what they read, and with what others have read and experienced. (p.71)

In the field of writing, interesting research was conducted with 49 females enrolled at the Alberta Vocational Centre in Calgary (Mulder, Braun & Holliday) to investigate the effects of sentence-combining practice on adult writing. Results indicated that the sentence-combining exercises used in the experiment worked especially well with adults. The authors hypothesized that the positive results were partially due to low-threat conditions resulting from the lack of specific terminology; that the immediate reinforcement aided them because adult students tend to be relatively impatient learners, commonly requiring some direct benefit; and that the sentence-combining material could be easily individualized to serve as an initial positive writing experience.

In his examination of English students, Halladay (1970) found no significant differences between age group achievement in grammar or comprehension but found that both intelligence and aptitude measures seemed to be biased toward students with the greater competence in English. Students over 44 compared favorably with much younger students, however, so age showed no direct bearing.

Perhaps another aspect of English which is often neglected in the effort to improve the accuracy of students' writing is creativity. Corso (1972) postulated that creativity plays a vital role in human development and advocated an emphasis on creativity which would facilitate heightened awareness, positive self-concept and an open perception of the larger environment in adult students in all disciplines.

One further study of special significance, this time because of its structure, involved a comparison of the teaching activities exhibited by teachers who taught practical arts or business education to both adolescent and adult students (Keep, 1973). Perhaps research of the same nature would be fruitful in indicating areas requiring attention in the English 30 field, as most teachers who are presently teaching adults have taught the same course to adolescents at a different level. However, such meaningful cross-age comparisons of learning abilities depend on the improvement of measurement techniques and methodologies.

The samples used in the foregoing studies perhaps have much in common with students registering in English 30 (adult), but until such research has become specific to the population in question, their relationships can only be assumed. Research governing the formulation of goals, and the selection of materials and methods for these students is in its infancy, but will in all likelihood grow in number and momentum along with the enrollment.

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At the first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

(William Shakespeare, 1600)

CHAPTER III

FACTORS AFFECTING ADULT LEARNERS

Generally, educators have assumed the study of student characteristics to be basic to effective teaching. When dealing with adult students, unfortunately, the educators' knowledge is often limited. The continuous process of change--physiological, psychological and sociological-- to which an individual is subject through his life as a result of advancing chronological age, has oftentimes been regarded as simply deterioration following the attainment of peak development around age twenty. Renewed interest in the potential of the adult student, however, has forced educators to examine evidence which, although not providing conclusive proof to contradict all the old notions, has added both complexity and optimism, and challenged the assumption that the path travelled by the mature student is necessarily downhill.

Physiological Factors

Certainly there is a progressive decline in some bodily functions, especially in the two principal channels to the brain--sight and hearing. Adults with normal physiological characteristics depend more upon vision in learning than upon any other of the senses:

> It is estimated that some 85 percent of all learning occurs through vision; consequently, visual acuity is a matter of utmost importance for adult education. Although the life span of the eye exceeds life expectancy, there is a steady decrease in the average efficiency of visual functions with advancing age, even in otherwise healthy eyes.
> (Verner & Davidson, 1971b, p.6)

In their handbook for teachers, Physiological Factors in Adult Learning and Instruction, Verner and Davidson detail the changes which occur in the eye and cite medical studies as support for their assertions:

Table 1
ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION
WITH DEFECTIVE VISION

Age	Percent Defective
20	23
30	39
40	48
50	71
60	82
70	95

Note: From Physiological Factors in Adult Learning and Instruction by Verner and Davidson, 1971, p.6.

Similar to their relatively consistent downward progression in vision, adults commonly have declining auditory acuity and auditory discrimination as well. They gradually lose their ability to distinguish different frequencies, intensity and duration of speech, all of which influence intelligibility:

> Physiological changes in hearing affect an adult's ability to discriminate among the different speed sounds so the greater the decline in the receptivity of sound, the greater the loss of power to discriminate; consequently, the greater the difficulty in comprehending speech. (Verner & Davidson, 1971b, p.14)

Certain sounds mask other sounds causing an overload situation creating confusion, especially in the older adult who is unable to maintain attention, perceptual discrimination, or the organization of the material. This condition varies somewhat according to the environment but, in extreme cases, can produce emotional disturbances such as depression, anxiety or frustration. In turn, these emotional disturbances contribute to the inability to discriminate sounds.

In a study designed to determine the relationship between listening ability and chronological age, Rossiter (1970) required thirty adult students ranging from 20 to 60 years of age to listen to a tape-recorded message after which they took a test for recall of information presented in that message. The author concluded that, "those teaching classes in which adult students vary widely in age might be aware that older students may be retaining less from oral presentations of information than younger students" (p.40).

In addition to a functional decline of eye and ear with increasing age, other biological disorders increase. Reaction time (the interval of time that elapses between presentation of a stimulus and the response to it) and movement time (the time which elapses between the point when a muscle receives a stimulus and its eventual movement) are slower. The data on human sensation other than vision and audition are more sparse and lend themselves less well to making generalizations but there are indicators that with increasing age, gradual alterations in certain aspects of speech occur. The rate of speech tends to slow down, and there is often some hesitation in finding the "right" word, especially if the word desired is one not frequently used. There is also a decrease in the speed, intensity, and endurance of many neuro-muscular reactions (Kidd, 1973, p.59). Thus, the decline in visual and auditory acuity or in strength or flexibility increases the time required to learn or to perform, but does not necessarily alter an adult's ability to learn. "The most pronounced impact of physiological changes upon learning occurs with respect to the element of speed or mental facility rather than power" (Verner & Davidson, 1971b, p.1).

Actual vocal capacity, necessary for example in public speaking, deteriorates and this along with other speech problems is further compounded by hearing loss. Other physical annoyances include a loss in the ability of the body to adapt and compensate for external temperature changes (homeostatic adjustment) and a decline in the capacity for physical work, depending on age, of course, but which can even vary with the time of day. A body of information is also developing concerning the biological factors in aging which result from the processes of cells dying, or organs changing composition to increase their fibrous content, or cells running out of their program (genetic determination) or the effects of environmental influences (radiation, smoke) and disease processes. It concerns the effects of hardening of the arteries, decreasing efficiency of the circulatory system, the respiratory system and the purification system, measuring the functional decline in the ability to taste, to smell, to grip. It documents stature decreases as feet flatten and discs in the spine compress. It indicates that the brain actually weighs less and less (Botwinick, 1978, chap.2). Age itself appears to present no barrier to learning, but these many physiological problems which accompany the aging process exert a significant influence on the learner. In order to measure the psychological operations of adults related to learning, physical variables need to be recognized and controlled in order to prevent distortion of the results.

There are further complications arising from the interrelationships between the students' physical conditions, their mental states, and their environment. For example, physiological changes associated with age are influenced by the life-styles of the adults (nutrition, exercise, leisure) so that among disadvantaged adults, the onset of aging occurs earlier in life. What proportion of the aging process is strictly biological phenomenon and how much has a sociological basis is questionable. To illustrate, Sheehy (1976) discussed studies which linked physical and emotional conditions (in monkeys) in which the male hormone level varied in relation to his emotional state (p.55). Although the cause and effect relationship was not firmly established, these and other similar studies opened the door to further investigations into the mysteries of the psychosomatic connections and the bearing they have on human performance.

Remedies for physical problems associated with aging must be left to physicians, but educators can compensate for these problems in a learning situation. However, teachers must first recognize the existence of the problems and be able to identify some of the causes rather than contribute to the problems through ill-conceived teaching practices. "Adult educators often unwittingly accentuate the difficulties arising from the physical condition of the learner by the ways in which they manage instruction and by the conditions established in the learning situation" (Verner & Davidson, 1971b, p.25).

Psychological Factors

Many distinctions between physiological and psychological influences on learning are questionable because of complex interrelationships and difficulties with measurement. Physical problems often give rise to emotional states that in turn inhibit effective involvement in learning. Stress, for example, found at exceedingly high levels in men and women at that stage of life ranging between ages thirty-seven to forty, has been attributed to a normal life stage (Sheehy, 1974), to changes in blood pressure (Botwinick, 1978), and to pressures and circumstances in the social world (Jarvik, Eisdorfer & Blum, 1973). Despite the causes, however, most studies show that learning performances suffer accordingly. However, this behavior, most likely a consequence both of changes going on in the body and external pressures, could be modified or maintained by adapting environmental conditions.

Intelligence

In spite of an abundance of research, many questions remain in the attempt to determine whether or not intelligence is a function of age. The problems inherent in measuring the intelligence of children are increased by more variables when measuring the intelligence of adults. Herrnstine's article in Atlantic Monthly (September, 1971) stirred interest by relating intelligence to genetics. New studies attempting to determine the predominant influences on intelligence at all ages and levels are forthcoming. Schaie (1978) found many people functioned as well intellectually as they did when they were young, but the young of today function better than the young of twenty years ago. Jarvik et al. (1973) who conducted longitudinal studies, discovered a remarkable stability in verbal scores if the health of the subject was maintained. However, the level of education was found to be a potent factor in intellectual functioning in later life. Botwinick (1978), found that the ability to solve problems that bear little or not at all on past experience seemed to decline in later life, but those abilities that depended on stored up information stood up well.

"Terminal drop," a significant decrease in I.Q. resulting any time in later life when the subject is near death has meant that "differences in scores within age groups might thus be a function of survival probability . . . and differences in scores in age groups might reflect the increasing number of persons with terminal drops" (Riegel, Riegel & Meyer, 1971, p.342).

These and other variables complicate those studies attempting to determine the relationship between intelligence and age. Does intelligence decline with age? There are two polarized positions, "yes" and "no". Recently, a heated exchanged in American Psychologist (Bates &

Schaie, 1974, 1976; Horne & Donaldson, 1976, 1977) indicated that the question was far from being resolved.

Botwinick (1978) sees no resolution for the controversy, not because different data are examined but because the same data are interpreted differently. However, his analysis indicated that any decline with age for many intellectual functions did not begin until relatively late adulthood, 50 or 60 or later, and that these declines tended to be small. "Age-sensitive tests" showing decline with age measured psychomotor skills, especially those involving speed and perceptive integrative functions. His aging studies tended to show that the single most important element in the organization of intelligence was a general ability, to which the amount of education a person had contributed more than did his age. He also found that initially more intelligent people seemed to retain their intelligence well and that people of higher socioeconomic backgrounds performed better on intelligence tests (chap.13).

Comprehensive overviews concerning intelligence in adults are to be found in The I.Q. Controversy (Block & Dworkin, 1976) and Life-Span Developmental Psychology (Goulet & Bates, 1970). The latter includes a chapter on the "Two-Factor Theory of Intelligence" which contends that intelligence has two components. The first component is "fluid," an inborn psychobiological capacity to organize or perceive relationships and form concepts. This is thought to be a fundamental normal intellectual function which develops genetically, a regulated process requiring relatively little cultural intervention. Included in this short-term memory span is the ability to change mental set, to maintain attention and to resist distraction, as well as to attain intellectual speediness in tasks. This fluid intelligence, often tested on the performance part of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Test, grows to age twenty, then declines. The second component is "crystallized" intelligence which is based on intellectual capacities nurtured by cultures (school, home, church, T.V., books, travel) and which develops initially as a function of fluid ability. Its elements help to form concepts and see relationships. This factor is a systematic way of mentally testing alternatives and hypotheses, measurable through vocabulary comprehension and general information (The Raven Progressive Matrices)(pp.423-466). Goulet suggests that the two-factor theory is particularly significant for adult intelligence because the older one gets, the remoter the relationship between crystallized and fluid intelligence. He also suggests that fluid intelligence is a necessary but not sufficient condition for crystallized intelligence. "One of the most significant breakthroughs in the last twenty years is the recognition that intelligence is as alterable as other human talents" (Cross, 1980, p.10). Cross reports that of more than 135 traits of intelligence identified, eighty are measurable. If these eighty human talents were grouped into six categories--academic, decision-making, creative, forecasting, planning, and communications--90 percent of all students in a school system would be above average in at least one of the talent areas (p.11). Such optimism is spreading to adult education classes where the development of human resources holds promise for students, irrespective of a possible decline in single aspects of their intelligence. If intelligence can decline, perhaps it can also be rebuilt.

Memory

Perhaps one of the more apparent differences in mental functioning of students as they age is in respect to memory.

> Just as intelligence is a function of biological potential and differential exposure to knowledge and motivation--this differential exists for memory as well--those with higher

> intellectual function (measured by vocabulary level), retain memory and capacity.(Lumsden & Sherron, 1975, p.92)

A test has been developed and cross-validated, using the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, (Grolelueschen & McQuarrie, 1970), which recognizes that there are at least two types of memory (short term and long term) and three processes involved: acquisition (registering, learning), storage (a chemical basis traced through the nerves), and retrieval (recognition and recall). Such studies aid not only in the measurement of memory and its development or deterioration, but serve to suggest aids that can be used to preserve it.

Botwinick (1978) presents a comprehensive overview of the studies conducted about memory and discusses remedies for lapses. He uses the terms "primary memory" (which is transient, short term memory), and "secondary memory" (which is the longer-term, more durable type) quoting studies by Craik (1977), Saethouse (1976), Gordon and Clark (1974), Clark and Knowles (1973), Walsh and Jenkins (1973), and Trueman and Kline (1972). In his summary, he includes the generally accepted ideas about forgetting: (a) In general, memory deteriorates with age; (b) meaningful learning is retained better; (c) material with a pleasant connotation is remembered best; (d) speeded learning is generally poor learning, readily forgotten. (There is a drop in efficiency of learning, compared with the young); (e) probably much of the decline is because the material was not well-learned in the first place (chap. 17).

The memory span (the ability to recall a series of items) was found to increase up to early maturity and to show, at most, a slow decline thereafter. Lumsden and Sherron (1975) reported that although there was an increase in the number of intrusions, age did not markedly affect ability to perform the required mental operations as long as the material involved was familiar. The hypothesis was that relatively poor performance of older subjects on a task involving "higher mental functions" may be attributed to their relatively short term memory capacity, particularly for unfamiliar material. They summarized the recent literature pertinent to memory loss concluding that although there was no apparent deterioration with age in recognition, in voluntary recall there was a loss of almost 50% (p.72). Studies by Goulet and Baetes (1970) on memory storage and aging raised the questions about imperfect acquisition, interference or retention, and deficient recollection, all of which indicate new directions for research about human memory.

Learning

There is a symbiotic relationship between memory and learning which gives rise to difficulties in measurement. These difficulties become increasingly apparent as researchers attempt to distinguish differences that appear between adolescents and adults during the examination of their learning. For example, "factors such as housing, and the economic and social position of the family deeply affect a child's educational performance. This is not less true of adults, it is more true" (Kidd, 1973, p.11). Although there is dissension concerning whether the differences due to age are of degree rather than kind, few would admit that there are no differences whatsoever.

Errors of omission, generally attributed to increased cautiousness, also increase with age. The fear of being wrong prevents many from responding which, in turn, weakens the learning process because it becomes less active. Botwinick (1978) concluded that "what may seem like a learning deficit on the part of the elderly may not be that at all. It may be a response or performance characteristic limiting the expression of what is learned" (p.271).

Rigidity often increases with age. "Highly specific role prescriptions concerning appropriate behavior and obligations learned and inculcated during youth and adulthood may turn out to be disfunctional for elderly persons facing changing social environments. . ." (Lumsden & Sherron, 1975, p.94). The threat of new situations and changing values develops in adults, in direct proportion to age, increasing the tendency towards a rigid mind-set. The notion that advancing age carries with it the inability to learn new things may have resulted not so much because of a reduced learning capacity, but because of prior learning and values. "Retroactive inhibition" or interference, where the learning of the second thing interferes with the first thing, increases with age (Botwinick, 1978, p.295). This phenomenon often interacts with increased arousal or anxiety, fatigue or depression to compound its effects. It is essential to ascertain whether rigidity is really independent of the ability to learn because many adult students are threatened by tasks, especially if the material is difficult, and this manifests itself as rigid-appearing behavior. When people find learning difficult, they may rely on previous ways of learning, as well, repeatedly trying the same ineffective ways of acquiring information rather than doing nothing, or they may simply drop out.

Kidd (1973) placed special emphasis on Gagne's theory concerning variables which affect learning, discussing changes in ability and intelligence throughout the life-cycle. On the basis of well-tested theory and experiment, he discussed both internal and external elements which facilitate and inhibit learning and the major implications for teachers. The eight different types of learning that Gagne conceptualized for children should differ for adults, according to Kidd, in terms of acquiring basic skills, organizing knowledge and stimulating productive thinking. He also pointed out the need for a wide variety of experience which would enhance the individual's capacity for problem solving and concept-type learning commonly associated with cognition. Kidd was not alone, however, in his recognition of the work of Gagne and the possibilities it held for application to adult learning. Further studies of adult cognition were reviewed by Long, McCrary and Ackerman (1979) but their recommendations were that more research was necessary before definite conclusions could be drawn. "There must be forthcoming improved materials, procedures, techniques and methodologies which allow for meaningful cross-age comparisons of learning abilities and memory-functioning efficiency" (Lumsden & Sherron, 1975, p.xiv).

Several studies were more specific in their conclusions, however. In a study conducted on 43,877 military personnel, test scores were analyzed in relation to previous formal education and age (Sharon, 1971). The pattern of the level of academic achievement in different disciplines changed as a function of age. "Knowledge of humanities, social sciences, and history improved with age while achievement in mathematics and natural sciences declined" (p.231). Many variables come to bear on such a study, but the results certainly corroborate those from researchers who see a positive relationship between learning and material that relates to the experience of the adult students. Differences between old and young groups in verbal learning were found to be greater at faster paces than at slower paces (Lumsden & Sherron, 1975, p.67). For older students there was greater likelihood of interference from past habits with present learning (perception, set, motivation toward achievement in learning tasks and selective memory) and there is likely a relationship between abstract learning and educational level and the value placed on learning (p.90).

Interrelating two hypotheses regarding age deficits in performance on learning tasks, Monge (1971) hypothesized that older people did not know how to learn as well as younger people because their habits of learning had deteriorated through lack of practice and that adults generally had difficulty in concentrating. He suggested that people who were more or less continuously engaged in making use of the tools and techniques of learning should suffer little or no deterioration in learning set. Likewise, Birren, Schaie & Warner (1977) found that years of schooling were a more important variable than age.

Emotional and attitudinal factors, then, are partly responsible for the decrease in performance that appears in later years. Increasing cautiousness associated with increasing age combined with the other attitudinal factors led Howell (1971) to conclude that, "the high level of error committed by old compared with young is suggestive not of age deficits, but of special difficulty for the old in dealing with relatively unfamiliar and less meaningful stimuli but that the older adult can handle considerable complexity in the familiar environment (p.72).

Just as environmental stimulation is a factor in the development of cognitive ability, "cognitive decline like cognitive development is conditioned to some extent on the nature and intensity of environmental stimulation" (Owens, 1959, p.334). Patterns of living and socioeconomic success influence learning, it seems, at any age level, but crossing all economic and social stratifications, is the strongly substantiated notion that age brings with it a marked slowing down of performance in a wide variety of tasks. There is evidence, however, that reduction in the speed of reaction and in learning is not as marked when it involves familiar or repetitive situations or when the subject anticipates the stimuli (Lumsden & Sherron, 1975, p.91).

Motivation

Although intelligence is necessary for achievement and success, it is not a sufficient condition. Motivation of adult students is a significant factor; their reasons for participation are an important starting point for any research on adult education. "It is important to conduct needs-diagnosis prior to designing and implementing a learning experience in order to ensure compatibility" (Boshier, 1976, p.24). But in comparison to research in intelligence, research in the field of motivation is relatively new. Contributing to its momentum, however, are disagreements concerning whether the basis of human motivation is intrinsic, extrinsic or a combination of the two.

A.H. Maslow (1970) conceived his theory of motivation on the hierarchical development of needs where the lower, more primitive needs (physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem) had to be sufficiently gratified before the second-level growth needs (cognitive, aesthetic, self-actualization) could emerge. These growth needs were plainly learned, continuously motivating and more individualized, but their satisfaction produced pleasure and health and a desire for more learning. Although these needs were insatiable, they could produce a feeling of well-being through total use of personal potential, leading to a balance between various conflicts, a heightened perception of reality and a more creative individual.

Houle (1972) in his attempts to develop an appropriate measuring instrument to determine the motivation level of adult participants found three distinct categories: goal-oriented (learners with clear cut objectives), activity-oriented (joiners who wished social contact) and learning-oriented (students who seek knowledge). Inaccuracies in measurement arose, however, from difficulties presented by the complexity of motivation and from discrepancies between what people said and what they did. Nonetheless, Houle had tremendous impact in his field, focusing attention on the need for increased research in adult education based on normal rather than psychologically troubled students. He perceived a continuum of natural developmental stages, each interwoven, universal to human nature, but increasingly obscured by the complexities of aging and socialization.

Using Houle's typology, Sheffield (1974) prepared a list of fifty-eight reasons why adults say they participated in adult classes. He further categorized them in five ways: learning-orientation (knowledge for its own sake); desire-activity orientation (social, inter-personal, often no connection to course content); personal goal orientation (clear-cut personal objective); societal-goal orientation (social or community-centered objectives); and need-activity orientation (introspection, or intra-personal meaning which may have no necessary connection to the announced purpose of the course).

Further attempts at identifying needs were made by Paul Burgess (1971) who tested 1,046 adult learners who responded to an instrument developed by the author. The results were factor analyzed and seven groups of reasons for enrolling in adult education classes were identified: the desire to know, to reach a personal, social or a religious goal, to escape, to take part in an activity, and to comply with formal requirements.

At the University of British Columbia, Roger Boshier (1971, 1972, 1973, 1976, 1977) conducted many studies concerning adult motivation and found that most adults are goal-orientated (to the extent to which their lower needs have been satisfied). He translated Maslow's deficiency and growth needs into "life-chance" and "life-space" needs, at opposite ends of a continuum. His hypothesis distinguished between the life-chance needs (which were short-term, often based on external expectations of a social-worker or employer or some other authority, and which ceased once the goal was reached or the deficiency remedied) and the life-space needs (where education was part of a continuous manifestation of self-actualizing behaviors where, as gratification continued, motivation increased). The participants in the second category had a history of participation and their self-actualization process was a more dynamic, continuing process than what Maslow described. Boshier found that motives for participation changed with age and maturation and often as a function of education and socio-economic status. He further analyzed motivation in his attempts to discover why students quit attending before completion of a course. This led to a "Dropout Prediction Scale" for the purpose of predicting and diagnosing dropouts.

Using Boshier's typology, Erikson (1978) found that life-space motivation reached a peak in middle adulthood and then, depending on the person's social and psychological circumstances, could turn more to a life-chance orientation: He attributed this to either the "Disengagement Theory" of the participant or to innate biological or psychological decline. However, he also found that adults participating in adult education were usually an elite group, in terms of education and socio-economic status, so the results were distorted.

Dickinson (1971) developed instruments to measure motives for attendance, documenting several interesting results: young participants were significantly less inclined to be enrolled because of cognitive interest than older participants and were more inclined to be enrolled because of external expectations; those participants with the lowest form of education qualifications were more inclined to be enrolled for professional advancement than were well-educated people; and women had slightly different motivation from men in respect to job-preparation. "An almost universal finding in studies of participation is that participants have a higher level of education than non-participants" (Dickinson & Verner, 1979, p.143).

Focussing on the "intellective" and "non-intellective" factors of adult students enrolled in the Faculty of Education, in a recent Alberta study (Wilgosh, Kimmis & Clarke, 1979) the prediction and correlation data suggested that factors involved in the academic performance for adult male and female students were different. "Consistent with earlier research, (Lunnenborg, 1977) the best predictor of university academic success for women appears to be previous academic success. For men it appears to be possible that motivational factors are of prime importance" (Wilgosh et al. p.36). Whereas previous research had suggested that the educational level of the respondent was the most important single factor influencing participation, Dickinson (1971) found in a study conducted with 510 married male household heads resident in British Columbia, that the years of school completed by the wife may also be an important factor. The questions of motivation and participation were the only area of concern that resulted in differences based on sex of participants. Several books dealing specifically with the psychological motivation of women have become popular in the past ten years, including but can you type? (Vickers & Adam, 1977) and Some Action of Her Own (Astin, 1976). In an attempt to document a type of sociological motivation in transition and in order to gain better understanding of the characteristics and goals of women who participated, such books provide insight into what the possibilities of curriculum goals and materials could be for adult classes. "We need to know, on the broadest possible scale, not only who prospective students are and what they want to study and why, but also how much time they can and will put into the effort."

Recent studies emphasizing developmental stages that continue throughout an entire life span have extended an idea that is commonplace in both elementary and secondary education. Although Piaget and other educational psychologists thought it necessary to measure and describe behavioral stages in children, observation of stages in adult behavior has only recently become respectable. These stages are thought to be specific periods of personal development through which all human beings must pass, and which together form a common pattern underlying all human lives. An early researcher, Robert Havighurst (1973) insisted that adulthood had its transition points and its crises, its developmental periods, in almost as complete a sense as childhood and adolescence. Each developmental stage, if not completed, leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by society and difficulty with later tasks. As Piaget found when he studied children, Havighurst concluded that it was necessary to combine societal encouragement with individual readiness. The theory of ages and stages has tremendous implications for teachers of adults.

Recently, further studies have served to corroborate this theory: *The Person: His and Her Development Throughout the Life Cycle*, (Ledz 1976) and *Life Span Developmental Psychology: Normative Life Crises*, (Dantan & Ginsberg, 1975) typify the more academic quantitative research being conducted in the field, while *Passages* (Sheehy, 1976) and *The Seasons of A Man's Life* (Levinson, 1978), although still describing developmental stages as origins of motivation, are more popularized versions of a subject that is becoming increasingly studied. Levinson, for example, presented the life-stages and transition periods of 40 men, aged 15 to 55. Human motivation, he stated, was dependent on a combination of social factors (class, religion, ethnicity, family, political system, occupational structure) and one's self (the part that is lived-out versus the part that is suppressed or submerged). He acknowledged as useful Carl Jung's use of the term "individuation"--a developmental process through which a person becomes more uniquely individual.

> In successive periods of development, as this process goes on, the person forms a clearer boundary between self and world. He forms a stronger sense of who he is and what he wants, and a more realistic, sophisticated view of the world. . . allowing him to be more independent and self-generating (p.195).

Levinson's theory developed around his belief that the life structure evolved through a relatively orderly sequence during the adult years, essentially the same for all men in the study. These stages consisted of a series of alternating stable ("structure-building") periods and transitional ("structure-changing") periods--periods which shape the course of adult psychosocial development.

Sociological Factors

Adult education benefits from research in a number of disciplines including physiology and psychology, but sociology too has enormous implications for educational practice. Especially difficult, however, is the problem of isolating social issues from the others because of the complexity of their interrelationships. Stress in adult students, for example, has been linked not only to physiological and psychological factors, but to the influence of rapid advances in knowledge and technology. These, in association with other numerous clusters of societal changes (population, marketable skills, geographic mobility, and compulsory retirement), placed demands on society to regard continued learning as a necessity for life. These changes have destroyed certain sociological myths, biases and stereotyping about age and ability, expanding the opportunities for adult students to explore new possibilities for education and allowing them to practice with self-initiated learning. Three existing trends in society which have served to increase the quantity of adult education, are the pressing social need for recurrent education, for community education and for technological education. It remains for educators to examine the implications of these trends for the purpose of improving the quality of education.

Recurrent Education

In recent times, the complex, rapidly-changing nature of modern life has made continuous learning a major thrust and adult education has become a social movement to accommodate that need. In an effort to pinpoint the social forces underlying the recent upswing in the number of available adult courses, Cross (1978) devised four categories:

(a) National pressure for expanded educational opportunities which has resulted in learning no longer being tied to a physical location;

(b) a combination of decreased emphasis on the credentials of the educational provider and increased emphasis on credentials of the learner (academic credit for experiential learning);

(c) a necessity for and pleasure from lifelong learning;

(d) a shift in life-plan due to job shortages.

Education is no longer a preparation for life, it is life. "A fortuitous confluence of external circumstances has helped to accelerate the trend" (Cross & Florio, 1978, p.vii). No longer is the educational system simply preparation for living dominated by age progression.

T. Byrne (1980) of the University of Alberta in an unpublished paper entitled, "Recurrent Education," said:

> There will be a shift in focus so that what was formerly viewed as a remedial process, compensatory, . . . will be replaced by a learning environment which is an optimal disposal of knowledge, resources and learning facilities for the maximum benefit of society.

As the access to education becomes universal, the conventional belief that most learning takes place during youth will be replaced by the view that learning has life-long duration. This implies the alternation of education with other activities including work, leisure and retirement, in accordance with what is possible and what is desired. One of the crucial problems, however, is that of the relationship between societal and educational objectives and unless the two viewpoints harmonize to a certain extent, the objectives of recurrent education cannot be reached.

Community Schools

A second social thrust is the community school movement. "Historically the focus was on the individual's needs, but recently it has shifted to the community's, whose problems are more than and different from the totality of the problems of the individual" (McMahon, 1972, p.26). Where formerly emphasis was either remedial or cultural and later business or professional, today there is emphasis on community needs with the underlying assumption that social forces, in turn, reflect and shape personal needs. Recently Dr. Staples (1980) announced that, "In Alberta we may soon begin encouraging the initiation and development of community schools" (p.16). Many facets of the community will have input to determine what community schools should teach.

The components of community schools involve and concern adults as well as youth in designing programs for their own use. By maximizing the use of community facilities, equal involvement activities are provided for students of all ages, not just recreational and vocational, but academic. The key to relevance of the programs is a systematic identification of needs through surveys, community studies, checklists, interviews, questionnaires, suggestion boxes-- in fact the use of all available data. The voluntary nature of most adult participation in the community school hampers strictly prescriptive determination of needs.

McMahon (1970) reviewed the various issues connected to the definition of community needs: concepts of educators, sponsors, clients; relationships between needs and desires; the balance between what he calls survival and self-fulfillment. "Need may be defined dramatically in terms of twin thrusts of value-related pressures within the community and the individual" (p.25). Is a mutual agreement between the educational planner and his clients always possible? The main thrust of adult education, according to McMahon, is concentrated on the community's needs rather than on the individual's needs and on social purposes rather than personal ones. He states that in the long run the common good is the individual good as well, and that a "meeting of the minds" to determine the program is possible.

> Many challenge this assumption. We do read, in the words and between the lines, that the techniques of the adult educator can be used to train, educate and/or manipulate adults by a variety of special interest groups to support some policies and oppose others not on the basis of self-interest and advantage but usually to lend support to the status quo regardless of whether such policies serve the public interest. (London, 1973, p.65)

Others who question the relationship between education and other parts of the social system require the educator to examine these emerging educational possibilities before setting policies.

Technological Education

"Technological change spurs and interacts with change" (Coutts, Clarke & Horowitz, 1975, p.9). But to derive concepts about the future of education based on social trends is a difficult matter. "Futurologists point out that the social consequences of technological change present complexities and difficulties of considerable magnitude" (p.8). Toffler (1970) outlines more aspects of the use of technology saying that we will witness the virtual disappearance of the "solid old durable leather binding".

> With vast libraries of data available to him via computerized information retrieval systems, with his own tapes and video units, his own language laboratory and his own electronically equipped study carrel, he will be freed for much of the time of the restrictions and unpleasantness that dogged him in the lockstep classroom. (p.275)

Consistent with the attention being devoted to education as a form of social service, a number of specific studies have been concerned with technological advances and their effects on education. Niemi (1971) documented the effects of video as a means of community development in *Rosedale - A White Man' Reservation*. Rosedale, a small town four miles from Drumheller, was used for a case study with highly visible results. Here the technology of the media was used deliberately as a means of education for the purpose of social reform resulting in improved standards of living which could be directly attributed to the efforts of the research team.

Other issues and media types were dealt with by Ohliger (1975) in *Media and Adult Learning* and Johansen (1978) in *Electronic Education* in which they advocate the use of teleconferencing, among other types, in postsecondary organizations. Milnthorp (1979) conducted a study about the CBC program, "People Talking Back" in which he analyzed the use of the media for adult education. McGechaen (1971) reviewed the role of the National Film Board in adult education in British Columbia, and later, (1977) the role of television in the same province. Carlson (1974) studied "Television and the Educational Relationship" in Canadian open adult learning systems and Waniewicz (1972) addressed the UNESCO Conference with a paper entitled, "Broadcasting for Adult Education." Although there was disagreement about the value of these vehicles for teaching adults, all agreed that the technology of communication was becoming increasingly important and powerful, and that the educated country not only would have to understand and use technology but would need to understand the effects that the media had on culture and the individual. Perhaps Dickinson (1979) best summarizes what society requires from teachers of adults: an understanding of social change, a sound philosophy of social organization, and an appreciation of the relationship of adult education to the social order. Adult education is not only a product of the sociological basis and therefore responsible to society, but is a means of developing a framework within which students view themselves and their social problems. "A healthy and democratic society must bear in mind that although not all can make social policy, all may judge it" (Block & Dworkin, 1976, p.15).

The stage has been set, then, for a synthesis of the data from various disciplines for the purpose of applying that knowledge to a specific circumstance. Research concerning physiological, psychological and sociological factors involved in an English 30 (adult) class, all of which have bearing on curriculum development for that class, is in its infancy. However, we have come to the realization that aging is a multifaceted phenomenon. Although it can occur independently at the various biological, psychological and social levels, these components generally interact. Examination of this broad structure might stimulate the in-depth research necessary to determine more specific data on which to base curriculum and instruction for adult learners.

> As things are . . . mankind is by no means agreed about the things to be taught whether we look to virtue or the best life. Neither is it clear whether education is more concerned with intellectual or moral virtue. The existing practice is perplexing: no one knowing on what principle we should proceed--should the useful in life, or should virtue, or should the higher knowledge be the aim of our training; all three opinions have been entertained. Again about the means there is no agreement: for different persons, starting with different ideas about the nature of virtue, naturally disagree about the practice of it.
>
> (Aristotle, c.310 B.C.)

CHAPTER IV

POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH 30 (ADULT)

The goals and objectives of any educational process must be a function of the problems of the learners and the needs relevant to those problems. Simultaneously, there exists in this framework the necessity for analyzing the overall purposes for learning any particular subject matter, or indeed for education at all. These purposes must reflect then, not only those values deriving from individuals, but from organizations and communities as well. Synchronization of demands of the students, the subject matter, and the society sets guidelines which promotes not only the quality of the educational process, but also its usefulness. Maintaining the relevance between the learners and the course processes and goals in a course such as English 30 involves aesthetic as well as pragmatic considerations. Although unanimity and consensus have never existed in the field of educational foundations, a major shift in emphasis has occurred in the past decade, making possible general statements concerning goals for an adult course in the humanities. This necessitates some backtracking from the present situation which assumes that they coincide exactly with those of a course for adolescents. The purpose of Chapter IV is not to dictate irrefutable conclusions rising out of a study of the characteristics of the clientele so much as to discuss and suggest certain possibilities in aims and objectives, content, and methods in light of the research that has been conducted in the field.

Goals and Objectives

The educational philosophy of the society at large plays an important part in determining the goals of education at any level. There has been a decided swing from the liberal, romantic sentiment of the early part of the Seventies, to a more practical, basic type of education. Ten years ago in Alberta as well as the rest of North America, the existential stress on the individual and individual freedom with responsibility to oneself for goal-setting and decision-making marked much educational thought. Rather than education existing primarily as an agency for society, to set up and perpetuate a cultural heritage or to prepare students to live in a democratic community, education supposedly existed for the individual as "an instrument for encouraging maximum individual choice and autonomy" (Apps, 1973, p.23). It depended heavily on the students' own experience. Three prominent educators represented these "Third Force" humanists in the Seventies -- Maslow, Illich and Freire. The social and political climate was sympathetic, reaffirming their respect for the dignity of all humans, faith in man's capacity to make decisions and the belief that a pluralistic society was good.

In 1970, the doctrine of Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed) was translated into English and its impact was far-reaching not simply as political doctrine but in its recommendations for how individual potential and freedom could be achieved:

> Problem-posing education affirms men as beings in the process of becoming--as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality. Indeed, in contrast to other animals who are unfinished . . . they are aware of their incompletion. The unfinished character of men and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity. (p.72)

The dialogue that Freire advocated required intense faith in man, faith in his power to make and remake, to create and recreate, faith in his vocation to become "more fully human" (p.79). Implicit in this teaching was the belief that each student desires to know and to take an active role in shaping his society.

The same assumptions underlie the statements of Brian Staples (1980) (Executive Secretary of the Inter-departmental Community School Committee of Alberta Education) regarding human beings as cooperators. "Not only are they able to work cooperatively with other human beings, but cooperation is essential to their well-being--collectively as a society and as individuals" (p.16). The teachings of Freire advocated education as a solution to the injustices of modern society but London (1972) accused modern adult education of being essentially a middle-class activity which serves the better educated rather than everyone equally. He felt that the elite, the advantaged, and the powerful controlled our society, maintaining the status quo through paternalistic education, the mass media, and myths which allow them to dominate the decision-making.

Armstrong (1977) expressed the belief that the Freire philosophy has been basic to Canadian adult education. In elaborating this idea, she compared the thoughts of Coady (the Antigonish Movement) and Freire: "The theme of social freedom and justice through reflective self-awareness and active participation within a changing and changeable environment is basic to both" (p.1).

Like Paulo Freire, Carl Rogers and others, Ivan Illich (1970) criticized the school system for perpetuating rather than eliminating class differences. He proposed "deschooling society" altogether. He envisaged "networks" where people would become independent, self-fulfilling actors with more equal access to educational resources, breaking the monopoly which schools presently hold over marketable knowledge. People would compete more on desire and ability and less on how they were labelled and controlled and allocated by institutions. Like others of his school of thought, he accused teachers of confusing teaching with learning. Faludy (1974) agreed, "that such confusion can arise," in societies which have come to confuse science with technology, fact-finding with the truth, and data with wisdom; which have come to equate meaning with consumption and civilization with comfort" (p.36). Dialogue between teachers and students, fundamental to teachings of Freire and Illich, would equalize the role of policy-makers, teachers and students, eliminating or at least minimizing the rights any one has to prescribe someone else's educational needs. Baum (1978) summarized this humanistic philosophy of adult education by outlining its tenets: the belief (a) in experience, (b) in dialogue and conversation, (c) in the presupposition that truth is multiple, and (d) that the teacher is the facilitator, and (e) that education is concerned with the total growth of the person.

In retrospect, 1970 was notable for the publication of several books which added impetus to this movement. Not only Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire) and Deschooling Society (Illich) had impact for educators, but The Modern Practice of Adult Education (Knowles), Motivation and Personality (Maslow), The Greening of America (Reich) and Future Shock (Toffler). Since then, a discernable shift in emphasis in educational philosophy has taken place, with the needs of the social community taking precedence. Sensitive to this shift in the values in society and to the resulting objectives of education, Toffler (1980) takes his diagnosis further by focusing on the directions in which the forces described in Future Shock (1970) have taken civilization. Institutions, he claims, must be multipurpose and multifaceted in response to pressures that they be responsible not only financially and environmentally, but morally - a fundamental paradigm shift to responsibility for providing solutions for social pollution:

> Finally, as Second Wave Civilization wanes and its value system shatters, a fifth pressure arises, affecting all institutions. . . . This is heightened moral pressure. (p.15)

This attitude is indicative of pressure from many areas of society to set new standards for education where the development of the individual potential can be accomplished in a more structured framework, aimed at benefiting not only the individual but the society. This allows the institutions greater authority in establishing certain minimum standards and requirements. John Godfrey (1979), President of King's College in Halifax, suggests ridding the system of the "palpable nonsense" of the Seventies:

> We need to restore the notions of competition, hard work and excellence in education: we must forget the age of the students and apply the same demanding standards to all those who wish to learn. A tougher curriculum? Most certainly! Better educated people? Without a doubt! (p.2)

In his terms the key survival skill to "unlock the treasure trove of prosperity" and social progress is education. Considerable public support accompanies the movement towards a tough, competitive education system, a backlash perhaps to the freer, relaxed attitudes of late. This is reflected in Time magazine, in "Help! Teacher Can't Teach!" (June, 1980): "Education has become a tormented field where armies of theorists clash, frequently using language that is unintelligible to the layman. Faddish theories sweep the profession, changing standards, techniques, procedures" (p.52). Amid the cries for the return of departmental examinations, for accountability of teachers and administrators and for back-to-basics education, the voices of Third Force humanists can still be heard from such prominent educators as Knowles and Houle who admonish teachers to start with the students and their needs when setting objectives.

Perhaps the fragmentary nature of adult education is indeed the essence of it. It might be unnecessary and indeed, detrimental, to attempt uniformity and consensus. "Each of us," wrote Jerold Apps (1973), "must be allowed to possess two or three philosophies at the same time. . .

for the purpose, I presume, of saving our thought from the deadly formality of consistency" (p.27). Even if the broader educational philosophy of the times cannot be entirely reflected in the objectives of English 30 (adult), the public emphasis on practicality and utility in educational aims must surely be considered important. The other objectives considered essential by institutions and educators include assisting the students to improve their communications skills, aiding them in informational retrieval methods, leading them to awareness of the value and beauty to be found in literature, and developing their potential as individuals and as citizens. Yet in the instance of English 30 (adult), the outline of objectives must be considered incomplete as the attitudes, abilities and needs of the students seem to have been neglected. The objectives of any educational activities must relate to the rest of the lives of those involved, but the English 30 program and instructional objectives presently implemented in this Province have been derived from the traditions and characteristics of high school students.

Generally, adult students are distinguishable from adolescent students in view of their expanded experience and wisdom, their being better-informed, their rigidity (old habits, attitudes and convictions are sometimes firmly entrenched), their lack of confidence and self-esteem (at least initially), their readiness to learn, and their more immediate time-perspective. In order to accommodate these differences, the objectives of English 30 (adult) differ not so much in kind, as in emphasis. The resulting course should depart from the balanced approach advocated by the Department of Education by being heavily weighted to compensate for deficiencies in the academic backgrounds of the students, especially for their lack of writing skills. Although the scope of the course recognizes that the objectives must be humanistic rather than technical, liberal education rather than training, emphasis must reflect the expressed needs of the students, and these are most often career-related.

Many adults are either returning to school after a long absence, or have failed English 30 in the high school program. In either case, they need to regain and build self-confidence in their roles as students. This is a primary objective. By understanding the transitions of adulthood and by exploring the methods of fostering their personal growth, students will increase their potential for success in the course, specifically, and their lives, generally. A closely-related objective is that of students becoming better equipped to cope with changes in their lives, social, political, economic and technical, in a world that is predicated on the belief that the educated person will have some degree of self-sufficiency and responsibility.

A second major objective pertinent to adult students is that they become reorientated to the school environment. Not only a supportive teacher, knowledgeable about the characteristics of the students, and a climate adapted to their needs, but the acquisition of specific study skills will enable the students to develop their potential. In many cases, their learning habits are, at best, rusty and they require additional help in learning how to study, organize information and write exams.

Since more education must be accomplished in less time, a third objective requires adults to take a greater responsibility for their own learning. They must be versed in the skills of information retrieval, often beginning at the level that high school students, accustomed to using libraries and catalogues, take for granted. Rudimentary knowledge concerning efficient access to information can make the difference between success and failure for students who, despite high motivation, are limited by time constraints and fear of failure.

The fourth objective requires that students develop their analytical thinking through the study of logic, persuasion, and argument not only for self-actualization but for preparing them to solve community problems. Traditionally, education has been concerned with passing on the culture of the society it serves, but adult students are in the unique position of being simultaneously policy-makers and recipients of policy in their dual roles as citizens and students. Their understanding of community structure and the dynamics of its operation will ideally coincide with increased expertise in problem-solving to produce solutions to social problems. All this adds up to the growing awareness that the individual's responsibility to society does not rest once he has accomplished his personal objectives and once he can communicate on a level agreed on by the institution. The humanities are "the custodians of the tradition of wisdom" (Capps, 1978, p.3). The learners' adjustment to life's personal, social and economic problems can guide them to the realization that their potential for development holds them answerable for improving their world.

The remaining objectives are closely related to those of English 30 (adolescent) as outlined by the Outline of Objectives, Alberta Education: the improvement in the communication processes (writing, speaking, reading, viewing, listening, and non-verbal), and the increased appreciation of literature through exposure to its many forms. Most often, however, students registering in English 30 (adult) express dissatisfaction with their inability to write, indicating where, in their view, the emphasis should lie. A complete statement of objectives and course outline for the current course are included in Appendix A and B.

These educational objectives are highly ideological in nature, couched in the underlying psychological assumptions, and susceptible to prevailing ideologies of society. Consequently it is essential to view their nature as dynamic concepts, requiring recurrent examination and revision.

Content

The content of the course is significant and should be appropriate to the population for which it is being designed in order to achieve the objectives both effectively and efficiently. Its length, depth and timing should recognize that not only are the students part-time, but many of the teachers are as well. They frequently teach adult English 30 classes in the evenings and high school English 30 classes in the daytime. Faced with an evening class made up of students of diverse ages, backgrounds, educational levels and reasons for registering, the teacher must adapt to half the time, a course that was originally designed to fill 133 credit hours. The underlying rationale supposes that adults are more capable of working on their own time and can work more quickly than can adolescents. However, studies about adult learning indicate that adults take more, not less, time. Condensing a course designed for twice the allotted time allows scant opportunity for adapting the subject matter of the curriculum to the learners' diverse abilities, interests and cultural backgrounds (recommended at the Tri-University Conference on The Role of a Teacher, 1979). If the length of the course were extended, however, many of the present students would be forced to withdraw, because their time is at a premium. It seems highly unlikely that these students would attend at all if they were required to spend twice the length of institutional time in class. Consequently, the current practice of merely concentrating the course content seems less desirable than choosing new materials that could be more compatible with the values and maturity levels of the students.

The second provision for mature students allows them to take academic courses in high school at whichever level they wish, as they may have the prerequisites, English 10 and English 20, waived. This too presents a problem in English 30 (adult) as the course materials are, for the most part, based on the expectation that students have mastered skills and knowledge of the prerequisites. How easy it is for teachers to be led into confusion in the attempt to provide the essentials of all three courses in 66.5 hours, wildly supplying work sheets of definitions and supplemental biographies of authors. The pacing of the material in English 30 (adult) requires that the teacher not panic, storming the confused students with paper, but rather eliminate the trivia, the excessive detail, the luxury of minute and elite technicalities. Bruner (1973) says it well in The Relevance of Education: "knowledge should transcend functional fixedness and egocentric limitations saving the student from that most common blight on human thinking: clutter" (p.xii). This view argues against charity toward irrelevant detail. "It is not harmless; it is lethal" (p.123).

Besides a need for economy, "the approach to adult education will be via the route of situations, not subjects" (McMahon, 1970, p.82). It seems logical since students do not always have the necessary background information concerning genres in literature, and since students have countless times demonstrated greater efficiency in learning when the material is closely related to their experience, and since learning is often proportionate to the extent to which these programs are geared to the real-life problems and interests and needs of the students, that the subject matter be organized around themes. Although most of the required knowledge can be systematically integrated into the thematic approach, much of the original confusion and threat of the situation could be reduced or even eliminated. Thematic investigation lies at the heart of

Freire's dialogue: "Problem-posing education affirms men as being in the process of becoming--as unfinished, incomplete beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality. . . ." (p.72).

Once relevant themes have been chosen (even though the actual materials are limited by the peripheral nature of the adult class and by the limited budget, as well as by the limits set by the Curriculum Committee concerning what is considered appropriate literature for adolescents), the available books could be chosen on the basis of class experience and interest. These should take precedence over what the teacher is accustomed to teaching, or what is convenient for the day-time classes. With the exception of one study (McLoughlin, 1971) which could detect no correlation between student participation in curriculum design and achievement, students are seen to perform better and more willingly when given a voice in planning the subject matter and directing some of the emphasis (Knowles, 1973; Verner, 1971a). The students, however, often have a highly complicated set of expectations and a great deal of experience against which to check what they see--but herein lies danger of distortion as well as enrichment. Students commonly have the desire to talk things over, to clarify their thoughts, discuss their worries and untangle their deliberations (Miller, 1970) so the onus is on the teacher to make the materials as relevant as possible to the concerns of the students, increasing their chance for individual involvement and capitalizing on the possibilities of transfer from stored knowledge and skills. Coincidentally, some of the existing novels in the present curriculum seem more suitable to an adult class than to a high school class. Stone Angel, by Margaret Lawrence, touches on a theme which has a certain immediacy for mature students, that of aging parents and the problems of coping with death in the family. Fruits of the Earth, by Grove, likewise appeals to those who have been acquainted with the isolation and motivation of prairie pioneers. There is perhaps more empathy for Willie Loman of Death of a Salesman (Miller) in an adult class who can understand his failure and frustration. Yet often this expertise held by the mature audience is lost in the flurry to teach them dramatic terms and techniques. Perhaps providing adult students with new materials would lessen the tendency to compare them with the classes of adolescents on the level of literary vocabulary. Just as unreasonable would be the expectation of equal levels of experience, maturity and understanding from teenagers.

Doubts concerning the effectiveness of schools to teach the basic communications processes are surfacing. In the face of the accusations that writing is becoming a lost art and many who enter post-secondary institutions are still functionally illiterate, new emphasis is being placed on the development of language skills. How devastating it must be to face a long term paper (assigned early in the class) requiring the comparison of points of view in two short stories when one is acquainted with neither "term papers" nor "points of view". Often this would be further compounded by the general feeling of inadequacy in written forms of expression. Writing, initially, should rise from the students' experience, especially for these adults, many of whom drop out rather than risk failure. As the course advances and the students have experienced some success in their efforts, they are willing to risk more literary topics.

Also important is the recognition and accommodation of "personhood" (Vermilye, 1972, p.2). The subject matter could be adapted by a teacher sensitive to the various emotional states of adult learners. Many of these students, for instance, lack confidence in themselves because early learning was often frustrating. They have broad experience in the world of work, and must budget their time because of a host of other responsibilities. Because of this, they lack time for reading, preparing papers and studying. They are responsible for family life, often with some negative implications arising from resistance to their school attendance from family members. They are usually employed but attend classes on a voluntary basis; their formal schooling lacks continuity; and, they are often for various reasons resistant to too much direction (Porter, 1970). These common problems require a shift in the role of English teacher who, although accustomed to discussing ideas and values, ways of overcoming alienation, restoring humanity, developing the ability to make wise choices and finding a life worth living, is unused to dealing with mature students on their own level. Students who are concurrently voters, consumers, taxpayers, parents, and employees do not have all the same reasons for learning as do their children. This fact must have direct bearing on the selection and organization of content.

Methods

Even total acceptance of desirable goals and selection of adequate content would not automatically dictate practical classroom procedures.

> There are considerable and valid differences between the enterprise devoted to the large and necessary task of socializing the young and that which pays attention to the learning needs of the world of adults; differences in purpose, scope, intensity, and available resources, and consequently, wide differences in the appropriateness of the methods.
> (Miller, 1970, p.8)

Adults are noticeably keener students than adolescents so the teacher is able to channel rather than inspire this motivation. In fact, previously cited studies indicate that the desire to learn is too high in some mature students obstructing rather than facilitating learning. Considerably more has been done in studying effective teaching methodology when dealing with adult students than in investigating suitable materials for their level, however. Much of the existing research concerns itself with stress and stress-reduction, threat-perception, and the special needs of adult students for counseling. The consequences of such research have been that the role of the teacher is shifting--becoming increasingly more supportive, less directing. Although there are no available statistics on the average age, or the age range of students in English 30 evening classes, if the results of research in closely-related fields is applicable, each class probably includes a much more heterogeneous group of students with respect to age and background than the teacher would otherwise encounter. Thus, the need for counseling on an individual basis is important. The older the students are in the class, the more acute the need for counseling will likely be. "Highly specific role prescriptions concerning appropriate behavior and obligations learned and inculcated during youth and adulthood may turn out to be disfunctional for elderly persons facing the changing social environments that are concomitant with urban living, increased residential mobility, and changing values" (Lumsden & Sherron, 1975, p.94). Additional aid is offered by Goldberg (1980) in her review of the literature concerning counseling the adult learner and by Rossman and Bunning (1978).

Often the students require from the teacher counseling on learning how to learn. Since many students have been away from school for a number of years, and others have been in school recently, but have failed, most are in need of the knowledge and skills essential to learn effectively. "The better educated subject has learned how to learn and has a set that encourages association to novel stimuli--without an orientation to problem solving, individuals may tend to evade the analysis of the logical components of problems and to proceed on the basis of what they think is involved resulting in maladjustment and low morale" (Birren & Schaie, 1977, p.64). Many leaders in adult education (Tough, 1979; Smith and Haverkamp, 1977; Houle, 1976; Knowles, 1972) have stressed the importance of "learning how to learn" and have made contributions to the understanding and implementation of this vital concept.

It is not only important that the teacher understand the nature of the learner and the learning process, but that the learners be made aware of the process too. The students' loss of confidence in their ability and fear of failure make it essential that the teacher provide reassurance in the form of emotional and practical support. Self-esteem can be developed (Brown, 1979) and utilized in heuristic, life-experience learning, leading students to investigate a subject further for themselves (Griffin, 1979). The effect of aging on learning can be reduced when an adult educator helps the adult learner to understand the nature of his difficulty and ways of overcoming interference with learning. However, since most English 30 teachers are educated in the ways of the secondary student, not the adult student, several resources may serve as aids: Hueltsch's "Learning to Learn in Adulthood" (1974), Charland's A New Look at Lifelong Learning (1976), and Bloom's Human Characteristics and School Learning (1976). Returning students who want to sharpen their study skills and who, in a broader sense, want to learn how to learn better will find practical advice in Study Skills for Those Adults Returning to School, (Apps, 1978), a text pertinent to English students because it deals extensively with improving communication skills and reading ability.

The educational environment is especially important for adults and this demands that the teacher shift the focus of attention from transmitting content to providing a setting rich in resources needed for various kinds of inquiry. Knowles (1974) sees a contradiction in much of the adult educational practice:

> On the one hand, because of its marginality in the educational establishment, it has striven for academic respectability by holding on to the many curricular and methodological trappings of traditional mechanistic schooling. On the other hand, because its survival has depended upon its satisfying the real developmental needs of voluntary adult learners, it has almost surreptitiously--and often with a sense of guilt--adapted bits and pieces of its curriculum and methodology to the organismic model. (p.301)

The organismic model referred to requires that adult learners actively participate in their own continuous development in flexible learning situations. Hopefully this process moves the learners from dependency on the system and the teacher, toward self-directedness. But this is a gradual process, requiring that scarce commodity, "time". Optimally, such an approach fosters creative problem-solving skills, independent thinking and bold imagination, enhancing students' selfhood by allowing them to become more fully functioning people in a fast changing world where information quickly becomes obsolete. Even though much of the material in an English course does not become obsolete, the pace of change in the technological environment in which adults live and work, means that exposure to new and sophisticated means of learning is worthwhile in assisting students to keep abreast of changes. Computer-assisted instruction at this level would provide this needed assistance and, at the same time, compensate for individual differences in learning speeds and background knowledge. Some participative learning would be especially helpful in remedial grammar, spelling and mechanics of language by providing an interesting and efficient means of supplying essential material in areas such as poetry, where many students are encountering literary devices for the first time in their lives. Such vehicles of instruction as PLATO and TELEDON are only a beginning and where they will take us is impossible to say. However, it is an exciting prospect to contemplate. Because the benefits of individualized learning allow for wide discrepancies within a single class, the positive results should off-set the drawbacks such as the exceedingly high cost of development and the dependence on instructional technology unfamiliar to many English teachers. Meanwhile students would gain assurance and experience in the use of technological information retrieval.

Audio-visual aids, another form of technology, can also play an important role in the classroom. However, whereas these aids are often used for motivation in the secondary school, they serve a different function in the adult class, that of broadening the students' experience as well as teaching them material. Furthermore, though they may add richness and variety to a lesson, in view of the research that reveals the necessity at this level for simplification of approach, audio-visual aids must be included with more caution in adult classes. Background noise and unnecessary confusion should be kept at a minimum since adults take longer to learn material and already have less time in which to do it, Films, filmstrips and video materials, therefore, should be used with discretion. This is especially so in the first classes, where lessons must be conducted in a relaxed, straight-forward manner where students can proceed at their own speed in order to help alleviate their stress--a very real and detrimental problem for students.

A second way to assist in the area of stress-reduction is by placing emphasis on the physical and psychological surroundings in the classroom. In some instances this is difficult because of the peripheral nature and second-class status given to the evening classes in some schools. Even recognition of the importance of learning environment is helpful. Not only accommodation to declining physical health of adults but also the reduction of threat to them could be achieved through the establishment of an open, positive and supportive climate. Attention to small details such as lighting and the reduction of competing noise could be helpful. Teachers who talk and write clearly, who avoid busy work, who are well-organized, who make time allowances in the form of few deadlines and shorter lesson assignments and whose flexibility is increased by the knowledge that the students needs and problems are concrete and demanding, immediate and persistent, will likely find their efforts rewarded by more relaxed and productive classes (Langerman, 1974). There are those who will argue that these techniques work at every level of schooling, but that is not the question. It is not that their value is denied for the younger age brackets, but that the role of environment grows in importance for mature students who often have been away from the classroom for years. A compensatory setting for adult students must increase in priority. With the exception of schools established principally for adult students (Alberta Vocational Centre, NAIT, Grant McEwan College, etc.) the present practice contradicts this theory.

The anxiety that is aroused by a problem-solving task in the classroom depends upon other facets of the class as well. Bachelor (1973) conducted a study at the University of Calgary and found that stress depended on the relative ease of the task as well as the student's cognitive style and ability. In 1978, in an attempt to identify in the instructional setting the stimuli that elicited anxiety in adult learners, the changes of anxiety level through the course period, and the potent factors that brought about the reduction of anxiety Lam (1978) concluded the following:

> Of immediate implication to adult learners, it seems, is the recognition that tailoring course materials to the capability of learners and establishing good human relations between instructors and learners, as well as among learners themselves, are two crucial aspects of anxiety reduction. (p.92)

Given these two underlying causes of tension, the implications are that at least one of them can be dealt with early in the course, that of positive student-teacher rapport. Of crucial importance then, is that class period where the English 30 teacher encounters for the first time a group of students whose anxiety level is often extremely high, indeed high enough to block the learning process. Recognition of this possibility is the first step in alleviating this high level of emotion or to some extent at least, in combatting it. A second study conducted by Lam (1975), indicated that the level of stress does indeed diminish somewhat and there is a transformation of adult learners between the beginning and the termination of the course. Consequently, there is no need to water down the subject matter, just to rearrange it so that it is not front-end loaded.

For adult students, more important initially than learning content is relaxing and becoming acquainted with each other and with the formal school process. One of the ways in which this can be accomplished is through the use of groups in the classroom. "Paradoxically, it is often through the creation of the right group atmosphere that individuality can best be released" (Murphy, 1972, p.6). Innovation and experimentation with the use of groups as a learning model is increasing and supporting research can be found from many sources, including Miles, Learning to Work in Groups (1970); Jensen, The Dynamics of Instructional Groups (1971); Knowles, Introduction to Group Dynamics (1972); and Harris, Supervisory Behavior in Education (1975). The group approach lends itself especially well to a study of the humanities where a discussion of ideas is often as important as individual study. Participative learning, i.e. role-playing, case/incidents, simulation games, group discussions and projects all lend themselves to the adult learning situation.

An impressive and comprehensive summary of current empirical research pertinent to the instruction of older adults was conducted by Morris A. Okun, published in Adult Education (1977). Implications culled from recently published research were categorized under Gagne's instructional variables. Okun stressed that the rate of presentation of information was an instructional variable which increased in importance with the advancing age of the students. By presenting new information at a fairly slow rate, by allowing the adult learners to proceed at their own rates whenever feasible, by providing learners with ample time to respond to questions and by presenting a limited amount of material in any single presentation to prevent swamping effects, the teacher could facilitate learning in a very real way.

A second concern dealt with the organization of information. If new information were presented in a highly-organized fashion with the use of section headings, handouts and summaries so that the adult learners could grasp the material, a certain amount of unnecessary confusion could be prevented. Perhaps this would also be true in a class at any age level, but not to the degree that Okun found in a class of adults. Material that was initially meaningful to the adult learner and introduced at an appropriate level, encouraged the learners to participate actively in the process of learning. Learning strategies such as encouraging the adult learners to generate their own mediators, mnemonic devices and verbalizations were some of the devices advocated by Okun for the purpose of training adults how to learn. Although Okun's research can be useful in practice, it is highly unlikely that any one model of teaching or one specific educational environment will suit all classes.

> Teacher effectiveness is defined as the capacity to present the same lesson in a variety of instructional forms (environments), to select and use that form most appropriate to produce a desired outcome with particular groups of students, and to shift to a new form when necessary. (Hunt, 1971, p.52)

Although this concept has been recognized and applied from kindergarten to Grade 12, it is only recently in this country that those students in the higher age brackets were considered to have characteristics distinct enough to merit attention. The matching of a specific teaching mode to any class is predicated on a knowledge about and an understanding of the nature of the students in that class. "Effectiveness therefore includes both the ability to use differential approaches, or to radiate specific environments, and the understanding of when to utilize a specific environment or shift to another" (Day, Berlyne & Hunt, 1971, p.52).

An ambitious review which undertook to divide the major learning theories currently adhered to into three approaches and to summarize the central constructs of eight prominent learning theorists, delineated the implications of each learning model for instruction in adult education (Dubin & Okun, 1973). Such summaries serve not only to integrate existing research by contrasting and comparing data concerning the processes by which adults learn but can also generate further studies to determine the extent to which different approaches to learning can facilitate the process. Learning models could, in turn, assist the teacher to formulate a working rationale for instruction.

How the implications of all learning theories can be implemented is beyond the scope of this paper; however learning theory has helped provide guidelines for responding to two central questions: What are the differences between the means by which adults and teenagers learn? How then can we operationalize these implications of learning theories into classroom practice?

The final phase of instruction--evaluation--is difficult. It is only after the students have been identified and the objectives of the course have been refined that a suitable method of measuring and appraising results can be designed. At present, English 30 teachers are responsible for total evaluation of their students who have recourse to the Departmental Supplementary Examinations if they wish to write the Provincial examination. There is often a time-delay, however, between the completion of the course and the date of the examination, causing a certain hardship for the students. Whether or not the same criteria for evaluation can be applied at the adult level as at the high school level is debatable.

Since public and other pressure has opened the academic doors to students who were previously denied access because of gaps in their educational background, there has been some public outcry against the possibility of declining standards. It has been suggested that the equalization of opportunities has resulted in a certain watering down of the course previously taught. Institutions of higher learning recommend more stringent standards of excellence, especially in written portions of the course. Many adult educators argue that the requirements should be not less difficult but simply more flexible. The present practice measures the students' ability merely in terms of written essays but this cannot possibly measure accomplishment of many of the objectives outlined in this chapter. Indeed, there must be quality controls on writing ability with minimum level competency that can be evaluated on written examinations, but other avenues such as evaluation of the progress of the student from the commencement to the finish of the course should play an important part. Oral examinations could perhaps be an option, or emphasis on problem solving ability in social situations, groups and panels could perhaps form part of the basis for the final grade. In many cases, because the English 30 class is an isolated experience for the students, the teacher has no recourse to any back-up records from other classes to assist in the evaluation process, so optional avenues of evaluation could be followed. For many adults, written examinations are the worst possible way of being tested, a method which contradicts the recommendations of educational psychologists in that it encourages competition between adult students. "The increasing insecurity and susceptibility to stress of aging individuals becomes particularly evident when they are placed in an evaluative situation and told that their performance will be compared with that of others" (Botwinick, 1978, p.265). The performance of the older people in classrooms was clearly best in the supportive situations and worst in challenging ones. Although this can be modified somewhat by preparing students for the testing situation, "test anxiety has been demonstrated to be a potent negative influence on the academic performance of college and university students, as measured by reading comprehension tests" (Wark, Bennet & Wolinski, 1980).

Although no definitive statements concerning the evaluation of adult students can be made at this stage, certain exploratory studies are opening the field to further questioning. Good examples of such studies are Steel (1973), Evaluating the Attainment of Objectives in Adult Education, and Fathy (1972), "The Role of an Evaluator's Values Should Play in Program Evaluation".

Nonetheless, most adult educators recognize that the students share the responsibility for the selection of objectives, content and format of the course and therefore the development of self-evaluative individuals is a primary goal. Knowles (1973) is especially emphatic as he advocates that human resource development be more "education" and less "training" in order to prevent the obsolescence of learning. This is based on the fundamental conception of adult education as continuing education--requiring rediagnosis of learning needs. In this diagnostic process, learners are assisted in identifying their own learning needs, planning the most effective resources and strategies for their learning and determining the most suitable criteria for evaluation. Here the evaluation of learning should include some provision for helping the learners re-examine their desired competencies and reassess the discrepancies between what their objectives were and their new levels. The aim is to produce autonomous learners.

As in the other functions of the teacher, it is imperative here that the needs and characteristics of the learners come into play. Research is only beginning to scratch the surface regarding this investigation of variables related to the instructional process. In The Design of Education, Houle (1972) states that the planning of educational activities must be based on the realities of human experience and upon their constant change. This includes evaluation, and to use the same yardstick in an adult classroom that is used in the high school classroom is both inappropriate and misleading. While recognizing the concern that mandates that every effort be made to achieve and maintain excellence in English 30 (adult), educators must accommodate students who have a range of ages, backgrounds, needs, abilities and educational levels, all lumped together in the same class. The responsibility for improving skills in students, (i.e. to read with greater comprehension, to speak with increased fluency, to listen with keener perception and to write with greater precision), rests with the classroom teachers. This situation requires that they play new and exciting roles as curriculum builders, innovators and evaluators.

A balance must be struck between clients and sponsors. Educators must assess the needs and desires not only of institutions but also of communities and individuals in order to negotiate compatible criteria for establishing the goals and objectives of a course, for choosing suitable content, for selecting appropriate methodology, and for measuring results.

"Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are REAL you don't mind being hurt."

"Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?"

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are REAL, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are REAL you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

(Bianco, 1922)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

Occasionally a large-scale shift develops in education requiring a major reorientation in thinking. In recent years such a phenomenon has occurred in the field of adult education, the result of which has led to lifelong learning becoming the master concept. Although formal education has long been viewed as preparation for living, the concept that no one can complete an education is currently becoming more popular. Although the philosophy of recurrent education is not original, it is rapidly regaining favor in the dynamic process of education. By focusing on the major issues that contribute to development of this framework, and by incorporating key ideas from many disciplines, it is possible to analyze the present situation in order to make suggestions to improve learning in the future. Such synthesis of ideas ensures that certain fundamental questions get asked.

Contributing to this new paradigm are trends in economics, politics, demographics, sociology, psychology, technology, and philosophy. Specifically, shifts in traditional roles, in occupational mobility and in the amount of leisure time simultaneously demand increased educational opportunities for adult learners. This increased need in society for educating citizens justifies the continuation of general education; however, adult education has come to be recognized in the light of national and international experience and research as not only a social necessity, but also a human necessity.

A tremendous response to the increased demands for learning has come in the form of informal non-credit opportunities provided in part by government agencies in Alberta, including the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower, but until recently, there have not been sufficient numbers of students interested in registering in high school courses to warrant sustained response from Alberta Education. Although no exact figures are available, indications are that adult student enrollment is increasing rapidly, requiring new attention from educators. English 30, for example, is in demand because it is generally a prerequisite for more advanced education as well as being the only compulsory course for high school matriculation. The time has come then for an examination of the English 30 curriculum in the light of recent research regarding the learning characteristics of adult students and current trends in society in order to determine if they are compatible. The purpose of this study is to make recommendations to educational practitioners for adaptations of the existing course, based on the premise that there are sufficient distinctive characteristics of adult learners to merit special attention being paid to improving the framework for goals, content and methods.

There is a great deal of overlap between the various disciplines and in becoming acquainted with the literature of these fields, one is struck by the variety of terms, each with subtle distinctions, used to describe the various types of education available to adult students: continuing, community, compensatory, further, upgrading, advanced, adult, basic and experiential. For the purpose of this study, however, the term "adult" was used to specify those students 19 years of age or over who register in courses be they credit or non-credit, formal or informal. Specifically, the main concern was with those students registering (under the special considerations granted by Alberta Education) in a shortened English 30 course. For the most part, these are part-time students who are concurrently employed and who have heavy responsibilities outside the classroom. They also frequently have great disparities in potential, as they range widely in age and experience and education. As a result, such students place unique requirements on the classroom teacher.

Based on the assumption that goals, materials and methods must be a function of learner needs, an attempt was made to summarize current literature about the state of physiological, psychological and sociological knowledge about aging. Aimed at the practioner in the field, an attempt was made to provide a comprehensive, somewhat panoramic view of the context of the adult learner for the purpose of suggesting a foundation for English 30 (adult) as well as for more specific suggestions concerning materials and methods that would be appropriate.

The contention that teaching adults is fundamentally different from teaching children has given rise to controversy within the field. The proponents of "andragogy" present five basic dimensions of differentiation: difference in self-concept, difference in experience, difference in readiness to learn, difference in orientation to learning, and difference in time-perspective. Critics, however, contend that this theory has not been sufficiently well-established to merit a separate discipline, but agree that there are sufficient differences in the nature of adult students and their societal roles to support the demand for increased attention to their needs. These needs rise out of a host of special conditions, including their status as part-time learners, their financial concerns, their increased responsibilities, their general impatience to reach their goals, and their lack of sequential learning patterns.

In response to the unique situation in which adult learners are placed, institutions have increased their flexibility and accessibility, but a similar accommodation on the level of actual course adaptation and teacher preparation has not been forthcoming. Research in the field of English for adults has been sparse with the exception of studies in Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language, neither of which deal with similar clientele or objectives to those of English 30 (adult).

Renewed interest in general characteristics of adult students has been spurred on by efforts to determine the actual potential of adults, and to ascertain whether or not there are any changes in potential as a function of age. Clearly, there is a progressive decline in some physiological characteristics as a result of advancing chronological age--especially sight and hearing. Other physical indications are not as marked, but indicate a slowing-down of speech, of reaction time and movement time. The effects of environmental efficiency of body systems exert a significant influence on the learner. Educators who are aware of these problems, however, can compensate in the learning situation.

Psychological characteristics are less easily identified and measured than their physiological counterparts. Despite the abundance of research about intelligence, for example, many questions remain in the attempt to link it with age. Socioeconomic status and levels of education are both important elements of intelligence and are difficult to control when testing. Finally, actually pinning down of what intelligence is and how it can be measured remains a crucial problem at all levels of schooling.

A more apparent difference in mental functioning of students is in respect to memory. However, the generally accepted ideas about forgetting include the realization that memory does deteriorate with age but that material which is meaningful or pleasant is remembered best. Once again, speed is a factor, with a drop in the efficiency of learning. Not all facets of memory deteriorate at the same rate and recent studies raise more questions about imperfect acquisition, interference, retention, and recollection than they answer.

In their attempts to distinguish differences that appear between adolescents and adults during examination of their learning, researchers document higher levels of anxiety and rigidity in adults. Several major contributors to educational learning theories see positive relationships between ability to learn and material that relates to the experience of the students, especially in adults. In addition, they have found that the learning habits of many adults deteriorate through lack of practice and that generally adults have more difficulty concentrating. The environment in the case of learning, just as in memory and intelligence, has significant influence.

A major focus has been on motivation--students' reasons for participating are considered crucial to the development of curricula. Research on needs diagnosis has taken many forms, but of late the more popular theories document developmental stages in the lives of adults. These are specific periods of personal development through which all human beings must pass, and which form a pattern common to all human lives. Other common theories have as their basis more sociological or biological reasons for participation. Few, if any, of the existing studies, however, pertain specifically to Albertans registering in English 30, indicating the necessity for further research before conclusions can be exact.

Social trends also have enormous implications for educational practice. Three emerging phenomena in society include the pressing demand for recurrent education, the recent focus on community schools and the quickening thrust of technological education, all of which contribute to the upsurge of adult education.

These sociological factors in combination with the physiological and psychological factors of the learners' situation provide the context of adult education. Synthesis of data from the various disciplines could reveal directions for policy makers and might suggest application of the resulting knowledge to a specific circumstance. The realization that aging is a multifaceted phenomenon coupled with the assumption that curricula must reflect not only the intentions of the institutions but of the students and their world, leads practitioners into new roles as curriculum designers and innovators.

The purpose of learning requires an examination of emerging philosophies of education in society. In the past decade there has been a decided swing from the liberal, romantic sentiment of the early Seventies to a more practical, basic type of education. Reacting against the existential stress on individualism, the current shift puts emphasis on the needs of society, placing the responsibility for solving social problems on an educated populace. Standards of education are reentering the limelight, allowing institutions greater authority in establishing minimum competency requirements. Perhaps this is simply a backlash to the freer, relaxed attitudes of the earlier period, but rather than being merely a swing of the educational pendulum, indications are that a certain progression is in fact taking place. Amid demands for the return of departmental examinations, for accountability of teachers, and for back-to-basics education, the voices of the Third Force Humanists can be heard from such prominent adult educators as Knowles and Houle.

The general aims and objectives for an English 30 course should reflect a synthesis of the best of these two extremes. In addition to renewed concentration on improving the communication skills of writing, reading, speaking, listening and viewing, are the longer-range objectives of building self-confidence, acquiring learning skills, developing efficient methods of information access, and cultivating analytical thought processes. These objectives reflect an emphasis on self-realization in combination with social responsibility. Like most educational objectives, these are highly ideological, dynamic and susceptible to prevailing ideologies.

The content of the course, too, should be appropriate to the students. Special problems arise, however, when teachers are confronted by a highly heterogeneous class and required to teach a course in half the usually required time.

The subject matter must be highly individualized, tailored to the capability of learners, reflecting objectives which are a function of their needs, and raising their levels of consciousness so they can become aware of the variety of forces that are affecting their lives. Not only the teacher but the students should gain an understanding of psychological and sociological influences, of how people interact in groups, and of how they mature and change throughout the lifespan, so as to better cope with the rapid changes in their lives. Because these students are governed by special Departmental provisions which allow them to complete the course in briefer time and to take English 30 (adult) without having completed English 10 and 20, a fresh approach to materials and their organization could aid the teacher in avoiding the pitfalls of attempting to teach all three courses at once, or bombarding the students with detailed, technical information as background. Adult students are seen to perform better when given some choice in planning a subject but the onus is on the teacher to ensure that the materials are relevant, capitalizing on the potential of transfer from the stored knowledge and skills of the students. Since the majority of adult students register for job-related reasons, emphasis should be placed on practicality of the subject matter with respect to improving the communications processes not only by accommodating students' values and desires, but by accommodating their physical and emotional states. Many of these students lack confidence, especially in the initial stages of the course, and because of their heavy family, employment, and social responsibilities are pressed for time. Their schooling lacks continuity; they are resistant to too much direction and tend to avoid ambiguous situations wherein they perceive a threat. These characteristics should be accommodated by a shift in the content away from the traditional program toward a comprehensive and flexible program suited to the needs of the adults.

Compared with a regular high school class, there are wide differences in the appropriateness of methods as well. Although some studies suggest that cognitive ability declines with age, considerable evidence exists to dispute this hypothesis. But there is a general consensus of opinion that with age cautiousness and rigidity increase, that there is a general slowing down in the learning situation, that there is a high level of motivation but that a loss of confidence in themselves as students causes adults to value accuracy over speed and to be defensive at the possibility of failure.

There is, therefore, a need to create a learning environment congruent with the needs, expectations and learning styles of adults while maintaining the pace necessary to cover the prescribed curriculum. It follows that adult learners will likely function best in a relaxed atmosphere with an emotionally supportive teacher who recognizes their tension and confusion and helps them come to terms with it early in the course. Initially, they will likely prefer a more structured class with material presented in a highly organized fashion with many markers (headings, handouts, summaries) and devoid of irrelevant detail and complicated aids. As the course progresses and students relax, their active participation in the class will help bridge the gaps between school and their world. When possible, time constraints should be lifted, allowing ample opportunity for learners to overlearn new materials. Based on the assumption that students will move towards self-directed learning as they mature, learners should be assisted in identifying their own learning needs. As the course progresses the role of the teacher may shift--becoming increasingly more supportive, less directive with more emphasis on counseling. The teacher helps the adult learners to clarify personal goals, to understand better the nature of their difficuties and ways of overcoming interference with learning. Hopefully, this process moves the learners from dependency on the system and the teacher toward self-directedness.

In the evaluation process, written examinations can be used to determine if learning has in fact occurred for the traditional cognitive objectives. Drawbacks exist, however, when adults are measured on the same scale as adolescents, when adults are placed at a disadvantage because they are overly-threatened by exams, and when the objectives are subjective and long range. If the program's goals include developing self-esteem or consciousness-raising, how can this be measured? As a safeguard against the possibility of declining standards, quality controls on writing are not necessarily bad, but other avenues such as oral and student evaluations could also be used. Nonetheless, most adult educators recognize that students share the responsibility for selection of objectives, content and format of the course and that likewise, the development of self-evaluative individuals is a primary goal. The aim is to produce autonomous learners whose objectives are in balance with institutions and communities.

In conclusion, adult education can become the vital ingredient necessary for the consolidation of psychological and social factors in our world and an English 30 (adult) class is well suited to such a task. Within its boundaries there is scope for fostering the acquisition of facts, skills, and attitudes, and developing the learners' potential, while pursuing the large-scale objective of developing community-conscious, socially-responsible citizens.

Recommendations

Recommendations based on an exploratory study of this nature must of necessity be offered not as rigid prescriptions, but as informed suggestions, which are subject to further verification both through research and through experience in applying them in practical situations.

Institutional

1. Alberta Education, could foster the development of English 30 (adult) by endorsing a wider range of curricular choices, especially in literature. This would allow greater freedom of choice for adult students who in all likelihood have higher levels of maturity and different priorities and interests than do their younger counterparts. In addition to extended choice, special units designed to compensate for individual differences in writing and reading skills, perhaps in the form of programmed instruction, could be useful in heterogeneous adult classes.
2. Alberta universities might consider offering a wider range of courses at both the graduate and the undergraduate levels to better prepare teachers of adults. Possibilities for courses include adult psychology, adult counseling and curriculum design.
3. Institutions offering high school courses to adults should grant high priority to providing suitable environments for adult classes. The surroundings should be comfortable, well-lit, and as far as possible, free from interfering noise and confusion.

4. Counseling services are especially important for adult students to determine realistic objectives based on their vocational preferences and personal aptitudes. Counseling would help to reduce their perception of threat by assisting them to understand the nature of their difficulties.
5. Additional assistance which day-time teachers take for granted such as teacher aids, secretarial help and access to the library should also be made available for teachers and students of English 30 (adult).
6. Budgeting for the various subjects in the school should include the needs of evening as well as day-time classes.
7. In-service programs specifically designed for teachers of adults would be helpful to those teachers whose preparation for teaching that level is inadequate.

Instructional

1. Teachers of adults might consider the maturity levels of adult students as well as their extended experience when choosing content. Emphasis should be placed on selecting material relevant to the needs and characteristics of the learners and related to their experience. In regard to short stories and novels, for example, perhaps those dealing with adult rather than adolescent developmental stages would have greater interest and relevance.
2. Most frequently, English 30 is organized around literary genres. Perhaps if the approach were thematic rather than generic, the students would be more able to relate new material to their own backgrounds, integrating experience with education. In addition, focussing on central themes or problems could encourage students to become actively involved in the class, reducing their confusion in reaction

to unfamiliar terms and detailed definitions.

3. Some of the content should have social emphasis to support the fulfillment of objectives that are a function of society's as well as learner's needs. These, ideally, could rise out of the expressed interest of class members in cooperation with the areas of concern in their particular communities.
4. Much material should be highly practical, with emphasis on improving the students' writing skills. Early assessment could serve as an indication of the specific areas of need, but there will likely be a wide range of ability necessitating individual rather than group instruction in this area.
5. The methods in the English 30 (adult) class are of great importance as the older the students in the class are, the more important it is for the teacher to speak clearly, write plainly, organize simply and proceed slowly. Although these suggestions appear elementary, often they are not accorded sufficient attention.
6. The emotional environment should be positive and supportive--establishing good human relations between instructors and learners as well as among learners themselves. Students would likely benefit from experience in groups, both formal and informal, as well as from other participatory and experimental forms of learning.
7. Emphasis on individualized instruction with flexibility in assignments, perhaps through the use of programmed instruction for compensatory functions such as spelling, grammar, or literary terms, would be an asset.
8. Some of the confusion of students returning to school after a long absence could be avoided through careful explanation of unfamiliar terms and procedures, expecially concerning writing format (term

paper, book review, essay). Early positive feedback and lifting of time constraints when possible provide additional support for adult students who find themselves in an unfamiliar environment. As a student becomes increasingly confident there should be a developmental progression from teacher-initiated to independent-student learning.

9. In the evaluation of student learning, written examinations should be supplemented by other forms of assessment such as oral exams, student evaluation and assignments. Student-teacher interviews could be used to provide student with feedback concerning their progress periodically throughout the term. The final objective is to assist students in becoming self-evaluative, aiding them to set new objectives based on an understanding of their personal capabilities and motivation for learning.

Implications for Further Research

1. Detailed records and statistics should be kept concerning numbers, ages, achievement, attrition rate and opinions of adult students in English 30 (adult);
2. In depth studies are required to determine adults' anticipated benefits from English 30 (adult);
3. More studies concerning unique characteristics of adult students could be useful in setting guidelines and indicating appropriate content and methods for English 30 (adult);
4. Research in determining the learning styles or preferences for any particular learning techniques among adults would be useful in providing direction for teachers;
5. Comparative studies in the field could examine the tasks and functions where older students perform worse than, as well as, or better than

younger students. They could also indicate whether or not there are significant differences between the needs and accomplishments of males and females, of urban or rural students, of low or high socio-economic status, and of poorly or well educated students;

6. More research is required to extend and augment present knowledge concerning effective teacher instructional methodologies in adult classes;
7. An examination of teacher education programs elsewhere could provide useful guidelines for possible teacher education programs in Alberta;
8. Constant research is required to reassess educational needs of the community in order to adjust the objectives of English 30 (adult) to changing economic and social priorities.

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APPENDIX 'A'

OBJECTIVES FOR SECONDARY LANGUAGE ARTS IN ALBERTA*

LANGUAGE GROWTH OF THE LEARNER

Basic to the elementary language arts program are language growth patterns which continue throughout the secondary language area. Since the language development of a student may be located at any point on a continuum, the language growth patterns provide points to consider in the selection of learning activities for the learner at the elementary and secondary levels.

1. Fluency--control

   Fluency in communication is a prerequisite to controlled communication. Language development studies show that students who speak more and write more speak better and write better.

2. Active--oral--written

   Teachers are encouraged to provide opportunities for physical action followed by oral communication, and finally by expression in the written form.

3. Concrete--abstract

   Understanding of the concrete generally precedes an understanding of abstraction. Consideration should be given to involvement in activities of action and observation before working with visual and verbal symbols.

4. Specific--general--application

   Attention is often centered on specifics before arriving at generalizations, which are applied appropriately.

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*Secondary Language Arts Handbook, Alberta Education, Province of Alberta, September, 1972. (Currently under revision.)

5. One-level usage--multi-level usage

   Language growth takes place from one-level usage to multi-level usage. The learner must move to various levels of usage to match the situation.

6. Simple language--complex language

   Simple structures must be understood before complex structures.

Following a determination of where the child is, the teacher and student ascertain the particular objectives and skills to be stressed for the language development of this learner. The language growth of the student is developed in the elements of the language arts through one or more of the activities of listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing.

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1. To develop the ability to communicate with increasing maturity, logic and clarity in speech, writing, and in closely associated expressive arts.

a. Meaningful communication usually demands unity, coherence, and emphasis of ideas regardless of the media used.

   e.g. - a business letter
   - an expository essay
   - giving directions orally

b. Effective communication through film, drama, and other expressive arts depends upon both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication.

   e.g. - creative drama
   - a student-made film

c. Oral and written communication demands an awareness of the unique nature of personal response which results from both internal and external influences.

e.g. - student presentation of poetry
  - group interaction following the reading of a novel
  - student interpretation of a scene from a play
  - a valedictory address

OBJECTIVE 2. To develop the ability to listen, view, speak, read and write with insight, discrimination and imagination for the end result of personal satisfaction and enjoyment.

a. Meaningful communication demands an increasing development of the skills of relating, organizing, synthesizing, and evaluation.

e.g. - preparation and presentation of a speech
  - paraphrasing of a passage
  - students' evaluation of their own writing

b. The development of listening, viewing, speaking, reading and writing skills leads to an increasing insight into life situations, enabling the individual to judge better some of the values of mankind.

e.g. - group interaction in the study of a short story, novel, a poem, or a play
  - class response to a film
  - a personal essay motivated by a T.V. program, a magazine article, a film, etc.

c. Judgement arises after comparison and contrast.
    e.g. - the comparison of two poets living within one century
    - study of characters from a short story
    - evaluation of two speeches on the same subject

d. Comprehension can exist at both the literal and figurative level.
    e.g. - examination of satire as presented in classic literature and comic strips
    - study of the figurative use of language in slang

e. The fuller appreciation of literature occurs when the relationships between content and technique are realized.
    e.g. - the communication of thought through a poem, a play, a speech or a film

f. The development of skills, in listening, speaking, viewing, reading and writing increases the individual's sensitivity to life situations.
    e.g. - an examination of and response to a variety of life situations as reflected in novels, song lyrics, short stories or films
    - a study of the particular use of language in such communications as an acceptance speech or a letter of sympathy

g. The ability to respond to a variety of situations with insight, imagination, and sensitivity enriches one's total life experience.

e.g. - give expression to one's personal response to such things as hitting a home run, viewing a rainbow after a shower, or walking in bright sunshine

h. Awareness of relevance and universality heighten the appeal of content.

e.g. - comparing current news items with occurrences within a novel, a poem, short story, or classical drama

i. Imagination as well as intellect contribute to the fulfillment of man.

e.g. - role playing

OBJECTIVE 3. To examine a variety of expressed thought with a view to understanding and responding to mankind's values, customs and traits, and consequently, developing a value system with which to make decisions and to live.

a. Sampling a variety of expressed thought enables the individual to extend his experiences, thereby increasing his understanding of, and response to the values of others.

e.g. - the study of the ideas expressed by poets, song-writers, journalists, novelists, biographers, historians, scientists, or dramatists of both past and present

b. Such an increase in understanding and response assists the individual in determining and enriching his own values.

e.g. - an examination of material as opposed to spiritual values.

c. The decisions which an individual makes reflect the values, conscious or unconscious, which he accepts.

    e.g. - student personal choice of leisure reading materials
    - a personal essay on a controversial issue

OBJECTIVE 4. To encourage an appreciation of the impact of changes in style, media, and social influences upon the developing English language.

a. The continuing growth and development of the English language has contributed to the rich and changing heritage of expressed ideas.

    e.g. - growth in specific vocabulary as a result of current space exploration

b. Speech and writing often correspond to and are affected by the developing influence of drama, film, art, music, graphic arts, dance, radio and television.

    e.g. - contemporary song lyrics
    - modern television and movie scripts

c. Figurative language continues to extend meaning and explain relationships.

    e.g. - study of current slang, colloquial usage, scientific jargon

d. The communication arts reflect the characteristics and conventions of a culture.

    e.g. - ballads, folk tales
    - contemporary television programs
    - contemporary verse

SKILLS

1. APPRECIATE AND PRACTICE THE CRAFT OF THE COMMUNICATION ARTS
    a. Examine the relationships between ideas.
    b. Discriminate among fact, fiction and opinion.
    c. Use library resources.
    d. Create a unique communication.
    e. Employ appropriate mechanics, rhetoric, and syntax of communication.
    f. Recognize and understand similarities and contrasts in language and media.
    g. Discover the relationships between a culture and the expressive arts of its people.
2. RECOGNIZE AND UNDERSTAND THE MEANING POWER, AND USE OF LANGUAGE
    a. Develop word attack skills.
    b. Derive word meanings.
    c. Use definition, classification, description, cause and effect, comparison and contrast.
    d. Utilize denotative, connotative, and figurative language.
    e. Identify, arrange and connect ideas.
    f. Revise for accuracy and conciseness.
    g. Recognize and use non-verbal forms of communication.

APPENDIX 'B'

COURSE CONTENT AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS FOR ENGLISH 30*

ENGLISH 30

INTRODUCTION

English 30 is a 5 credit course designed for students seeking matriculation.

COURSE CONTENT AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS

A. - Short Stories

Text: Perrine, Laurence. Story and Structure. New York: Harcourt Brace and World, Inc., 1966.

Teacher and class will select a minimum of ten stories for class discussion and independent reading by students.

B. - Essays

Text: Buxton, et al. (Editors). Points of View. Scarborough, Ontario: Gage, 1967.

Teacher and class will select a minimum of ten essays for class discussion and independent reading by students.

C. - Poetry

1. Text: Charlesworth and Lee (Editors). An Anthology of Verse. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1964.

A number of poems to be selected for class discussion and independent reading.

2. From the following sources, one or more poets to be studied in depth:

   (a) Leggett, Glen (Editor). 12 Poets. New York: Rinehart and Company, 1958, or Shakespeare, Donne, Pope, Wordsworth, Keats, Browning, Emily Dickinson, Housman, Yeats.

E. A. Robinson, Frost, T. S. Eliot.

Introduction and notes on each poet in the following:

(b) Chaucer: Canterbury Tales (Croft Classics)

(c) Coleridge: Selected Poems (Croft Classics)

(d) Donne: Selected Poems (Croft Classics)

(e) Keats: Selected Poems (Croft Classics)

(f) Tennyson: Selected Poems (Croft Classics)

(g) Hopkins: Selected Poems and Prose (Penguin)

(h) Cummings, E. E. Selected Poems (Faber)

(i) Shakespeare: Renaissance Poetry (Prentice Hall)

(j) Poets of Mid Century (Macmillan)

D. - Novels

One or more publications from the recommended titles included in the list, Grade XII Novels. See Section F of the Secondary Language Arts Handbook.

E. - Modern Drama

One or more plays from the recommended titles included in the list, Grade XII Plays. See Section F of the Secondary Language Arts Handbook.

F. - Shakespearean Drama

One or more Shakespearean plays from the recommended titles included in the list, Grade XII Shakespearean Plays.

G. - Non-Fiction (Optional)

If time and interest permit, study one or more of the recommended titles included in the list, Grade XII Non-Fiction. See Section F of the Secondary Language Arts Handbook.

H. - Language

Corbin, Perrin and Buxton. Guide to Modern English. Scarborough, Ontario: Gage, 1959. (Currently under revision)

*Program of Studies for Senior High Schools 1978.